



# DHARMA AND LIFE

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## PREFATORY NOTE.

**P**ROFESSOR Bertrand Russell, in the Preface to his recent great work, "Principles of Social Reconstruction," has pointed out that most of the impulses to human life and conduct can be classed under two heads,—*possessive* those which aim at acquiring or retaining valuable things for one's self; *creative*, those which aim at putting into the world something which can benefit all and which does not pass into private possession. Mr. Russell also holds that the State, War, and Property are embodiments of possessive impulses, while Education, Marriage, and Religion ought to embody, though they now do so imperfectly, the creative impulses.

The *main* aim of the present work is to show that all these six institutions can be—and are—made to subservise creative purposes under the transformation they undergo when men are guided by the rules and principles of Dharma. Part I (now published) deals with the State, War, and property.

Part II (in the press) will deal similarly with Education, Marriage and Religion. Part I is preceded by a searching preliminary examination (Chapter I—VI) of the origin, aims, and methods of modern European Civilisation, and by a defence (Chapter VII—X) of the origin, nature, and aims of the institution of Chaturvarnya on which the civilisation of India, now in decay, was originally based.

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## CHAPTER I

### The Mentality of our Age.

**E**UROPE has always trifled with the problem of the struggle of life, and so her thinkers have failed to put before the masses of their people any satisfactory view of the true aim and import of life or the means by which to reach its final goal. The recent war has opened men's minds once more to the importance of the problem. The mentality of the German people and the moral forces which brought on the catastrophe of the recent world war have opened men's minds again to the need of a new orientation and departure in ethical ideals and a discussion of their true anthropological psychological

and metaphysical foundations and of the criteria by which we must test men's principles of action and the policy of states and communities in the future. Are the treaties of states and the public professions of statesmen and sovereigns to be hereafter relied on as binding on them? Have small European states or Asiatic peoples any rights to the self determination of their own National life and methods of government? Is any strong state community justified in tyrannising over, or exploiting the resources of weaker people and of keeping them enslaved and disintegrated for the mere purpose of self aggrandisement and the mere love of power for its own people and leaders? Not only German mentality, but the Russian mentality of today, offers a problem of supreme ethical importance for Western thinkers and leaders of today. Is the Bolshevik experiment, social and political really aiming at the improvement of the status of the working classes? Has British labour any true relation of alliance or solidarity with the Russian Communists and proletariat now said to be enthroned in place of the late autocratic Tsardom? Is Europe justified in entering—or destined in any measurable future time to enter—

upon a course of social reform leading to the goal which Russian communism and the soviet constitutional system have in contemplation ?

For nearly three quarters of a century the principles of utilitarianism have been propagated in Great Britain and the Continent of Europe with an enthusiasm almost unparalleled in the history of human thought. Thinkers and communities there have openly declared and emphasised their conviction that there is more of pleasure than of pain in the world, that in god's providential order of the world the aim is to increase the sum total of happiness and to lessen the sum total of human misery, and that man's duty is to be constantly and aggressively active in his attitude towards the world of matter and his relations with his fellow men and communities on earth. There has been in consequence a great development of materialism in all its forms all over Europe. The influence of what has been called the school of "progress" has been predominant everywhere. Hegelian philosophy, utilitarian ethic and the evolutionary synthesis of life and thought—all tended to create the love of ascendancy and aggression in the average mentality of the European man, and maintain



the optimistic spirit which induces men to ignore altogether the spirit of man and to magnify the exploits and achievements of science and machinery

The student of history knows well that, since the Renaissance movement began in Italy at the close of the Middle Ages and gained ground all over Europe in one unbroken line of triumph, the ancient Greek ideals of law, freedom, power, and happiness in an omnipotent state have gained an enormous vogue. Machiavelli, Darwin and Nietzsche have developed those ideals to their logical conclusions in both the theory and practice of life, individual and social. At last we have everywhere the triumph of the modern philosophy of Humanism, Pragmatism and Activism. "Arms, give me arms,"—to use the words in a verse of Leopardi, the Italian poet—is the cry everywhere, the cry of all men of all lands in all spheres of life and thought. A modern European writer says truly—"The theoretical man is also practical he lives, he wills, he acts like all others. The so called practical man is also theoretical, he contemplates believes thinks, reads, writes, loves music and the other arts." This is the age when man's will and activity are alone regarded as affirming his true nature as a living being and deter-

mining his only goal of life. There are no doubt in Europe contending principles, parties, programmes, politicians, and schools of thought. But there is no real divergence of practice in the lives of men and societies. The renaissance of Paganism is a reality and there is no doubt that the effort to transform the moral consciousness of man and destroy his belief in "Super Nature" has been as successful as it has been titanic in the scale of its operations.

The prevailing stand point everywhere is that of value. The ideas of *obligation* and *virtue* have ceased to influence human life or thought. Neither the Aristotelian conception of "the good" nor the Kantian idea of "ought" (or the Categorical Imperative, as it is named) has no longer a place in men's schemes of conduct for the individual, the crowd, the society, the nation or the State. There is only this world and no other. There is no reality penetrable by thought, reason, or faith outside this world of sense perception—no spirit immanent in the universe no God transcending it by his supreme, omnipotent, omniscient and righteous personality. Aesthetics philosophy poetry morality, politics are all conditioned by this life of the material world, and, as has been well said "life is

without a summit." We may ascend to any heights that may be possible, and yet we cannot transcend, the finite, the material, and the particular. The spirit is an unverifiable chimera, an unreality which is without a shadow of basis even in the realm of probability. Life consists in the effort at self-assertion for the individual, for the group, and for the community as a whole.

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## CHAPTER II.

### The Problem of Evil in Western Thought

**M**EN and thinkers in Europe have never dealt seriously with the problem of evil and suffering life, of crime and its punishment, of the sin and sensualism in man's nature and of their effects on human destiny and on group and social life. No one denies the disciplinary or reformatory value of suffering. But this test of life on earth in one of its leading aspects cannot help us to look upon it with approbation, or in vindicating it from the attacks of unbelievers of some sorts who engage in the pastime of vilipending the doctrine which asserts the existence of a supreme creator and director of the universe. It is no defence at all to assert that they see only one side of life. Why is there evil at all and suffering or the need for punishment in the dispensation of an omniscient and benevolent being who is responsible for the order of the universe? Christianity in Europe today has lost its old ground, chiefly because its divines and preachers have failed to explain the problem of evil here and hereafter. In

fact, their doctrines regarding hell and its eternal punishments and sufferings have only hastened the rapid decline of the Christian faith. Nor have philosophers and thinkers in the West fared better in offering a satisfactory explanation of the problem of life. If socialism, communism, and anarchism, have numerous adherents in Europe and if Labour insists on putting into action those principles of syndicalism which have sounded the death-knell of capitalism and its destruction at no distant date, it is because the theologians and thinkers of the West have failed to justify the character of the present social organism, its economic structure, and its relations to the state and to the peoples and races who inhabit the rest of the world—and chiefly those who belong to the civilisations which have sprung and flourished in the continent of Asia. Much of the optimism which has prevailed in recent decades in Europe and its inhabitants is due to the manner in which they have exploited the resources of other continents and the peoples inhabiting them. But European aggression abroad has brought with it its inevitable punishment, though too long deferred. The late world-war and its stupendous evils, losses and sufferings are due to the rivalries of European states in the struggle for

universal domination and imperial ascendancy. There are people who are fond of maintaining that the world-war and the evils which have followed in its train are due to the peculiar mentality and attitude of the Germans in the transaction of their national and international concerns. But racial and political aggression has not been confined to Germany. Germany is now humiliated and has ceased to be a factor of importance in the guidance of the world's concerns. But the conflicts of races and the rivalries and ambitions of nations remain the same. The reproaches cast upon Germany and its war lords are now recoiling on those who banded themselves together to overthrow them and spoke as if they only cared to proclaim the rights of all groups of humanity to live their own ideals of life without molestation or interference from outside. The era of universal peace and mutual good will is still as far from us as ever. The public conscience of the leading states and powers who allied and associated themselves in order to overthrow German racial aggressiveness and ambitions is conspicuous only by its absence. The pitiful and contemptible figure of Dr. Wilson has disappeared from the stage of public life amid scenes

of humiliating failure and the sobs of displaced and distressed egotism. The conferences—never ending, still beginning—which have followed among the leading powers of Europe and the world have brought nothing to light except the undying passions of men and the limitless resources of their vanity and greed. The optimistic mood of the European mind so long in evidence and so fruitful of wars of aggressive exploitation by European states in Asia and Africa and elsewhere is now giving way in consequence of the prevalence of hunger and distress in European countries, the enormous rise in the prices of even the necessities of life and the consequent sufferings of men even in the most prosperous of them all. We have been hitherto told that only the aberration of the human mind can be responsible for the prevalence or acceptance of pessimism as a possible or probable explanation of life as a whole or even of any side or section of it. But now a change is coming over the spirit and attitude of men. Men want a better ethical and spiritual guidance than they have had. They recognise the merits of creeds other than those which have prevailed hitherto in Europe. The belief in the possibility of communi-

cation with souls after they have passed from the scenes of their sojourn on earth is spreading everywhere and is destined to influence the beliefs and activities of men and communities in the near future. The idea of re-incarnation--and of frequent re-incarnations, too—for the soul, already spreading in the West, will thereby receive a strengthening which will doubtless also influence the activities of men in yet unthought-of directions and also transform the prevailing conceptions regarding the true aim of social life and state-organisation. We do not say that all men will become pessimists. We, Indians, are not pessimists, even though our views of life are opposed as the poles to those prevailing among Western peoples. Even pessimistic conceptions have a shred of truth not without value in their bearing on human life and destiny. In what sense they deserve recognition as valuable truth men need to know, and especially those who, like Europeans at large live only to be a curse to the rest of the world.

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## CHAPTER III

### The True Import of Indian Pessimism.

THE leading philosopher of "Humanism" in England asks,—“What difference is made to the facts by our attitude towards them?” In the *first* place, we reply, we get a truer conception of their import and value, even as those do who view a palace, temple or tower from various coigns of vantage. *Secondly*, as our own attitude to life changes, our character and activities change, too, and the social and political organism of which we form an integral part changes in its constitution and outlook. Man's destiny and career after death, too, is influenced in due course, and that is a consideration which ought to influence us too. Our sense of the changing and transient character of our environment here and of the permanence of our own conscious selves is what is peculiar to the Indian temperament and is conspicuous by its absence in the mind of the western man. Hence, we limit our activities in this life by the consideration that they should not mar our course and destiny in our

future life or lives. This limitation of activities to what will keep us free from self-inflicted harm without endangering the welfare of the soul in future lives is what is contemptuously called pessimism in Europe but improperly. It is a healthy kind of pessimism if it indeed deserves to be called pessimism. We do not despise the world, but regard it as the field in which our sense of righteousness and human fellowship is to have the amplest opportunities for exercise. We consider life on earth as *essential* for the working out of all tendencies to sin—selfishness and sensualism by the promotion of all virtuous tendencies and by the attainment of purity and spirituality. It is only the unquestionable evanescence of our joys here of all kinds that makes us *in a sense* pessimistic. The *Bhagavad Gita* therefore teaches that man has only the right to all righteous activities in life but not to the fruits thereof. Hence we regard this as the Holy Land to which in Swami Vivekananda's impressive language all souls (mult) come wending their way to God after working out their harmful tendencies and realising Him in His *universal form and essence*.

The limitation of activities in the manner above alluded to has no connection with the spirit of *true* pessimism which tends to relax the elastic spring of good nature in man and to induce him to indulge in vice, tyranny, alcoholic indulgences, and the demoralising methods of trade exploitation which are resorted to in order to indulge in the communal self-glorification and egotism which is born of political power and prestige. It has nothing to do with the philosophy of quietism which makes man ashamed of all healthy instincts and right forms of activity. We do not revolt against the principles of true civilisation which humanise men, though we disregard that kind of scientific spirit which gains its triumphs over the arcana of nature only to destroy millions upon millions of fellow-men and to plunder the resources and possessions of other races and communities than one's own. While other races aim at reaching the power of the "Bull," the "Bear," or the "lion," we in India aim at being "a nation of philosophers," of God-like men possessed of sweet serenity and simplicity. While in the West statesmen and soldiers claim men's devoted admiration and allegiance, in India we still venerate only saints and prophets like Sri Ramakrishna and

Swami Vivekananda. That is due to the fact that, while we attach due value to the life of change and activity inseparable from our birth and existence as men on earth, we think that we should not be too much attached to worldliness and worldly joys as if they were the Alpha and Omega of existence. For, the realisation of the infinitude of the *seemingly* finite living self with which we wholly occupy and identify ourselves in our ordinary life is the true aim of existence here. The *thing-in-itself* of Kant is not for us what it was to him, viz., an unverifiable ideal of the practical reason or a mere concept of the pure reason,—but a reality which we can realise even while here if trained in accordance with the methods of the *Vedic-Yoga*. To Schopenhauer the realisation of the self seemed an *extinction of the self*, and so he held that every assertion of the will to live can only lead to an increase of misery. We, the followers of the Veda, hold that any form of prescribed and righteous activity (Dharma) can only lead, if we keep our minds free from egoism, to the purity of mind which can lead to the Self-Realisation which leads to the unmixed Bliss which is the true nature of the Self. Thus, the Vedanta

philosophy has no affinity with the Pessimism of Schopenhauer which is sometimes identified with it With us, there can be no extinction of the Reality and Bliss which is our innermost Self Nor do we like Hartmann, identify our innermost Self whose essential nature is bliss with what he calls the Unconscious whose "final manifestation is a world of mutually exclusive beings, each to be judged from the standpoint of his individuality" With Hartmann, the happiness of the individual is of the essence of ethical conduct, and hence it is no wonder that he postulated a world in which all effort after happiness brings only misery If we grant his premises we must also draw his conclusion as inevitable But the Vedantin knows that the One Self is immanent in all and is therefore all pervading Hence the Vedantic ethics is one of universal benevolence and self denial not one which advocates unmitigated individual satisfaction for the individual only to discover that the pursuit of it defeats itself Our Kaivalya or the realisation of the one Self is a state of Bliss—or rather it is Bliss in its innermost essence and not a mere exterior manifestation of the world of phenomena—which can only spring

from the joyous life of self-denial which cares for the welfare of all and which contributes to the joys of existence of all men and all other beings in the world. This is the Loka-Sangraha—the effort towards the achievement of the solidarity of man—and the universe which the Gita prescribes for all true Aryas, for both Karma-Yogis and for the enlightened Jnana-Yogis. The Vedantin labours most efficiently when he has realised his identity with the supreme principle and centre of all existence, the one Self without a second. His labours and joys of realisation can alone produce a new world in which all the problems of life are solved, all men and all beings are delivered from the evils and despairs of life and the inspiration of joyful hope comes to all through the harmony arising from the perception of the One Self in all the various elements of life, and in all the individuals who are working for their healthy and happy evolution into a unified whole.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### Morality, Western and Indian.

THE reaction from the pessimism which was coming into vogue in Europe in the earlier half of the Nineteenth Century took a strange form. Men became impatient of all earnest inquiry into what constitutes worth as opposed to mere utility. Such inquiry as followed the reaction related purely to the question of the standard or basis of morality, and the results gained therefrom were so contradictory that ethical science became discredited. In India, we have never expected much from scientific investigations into the nature of morality, its basis and standards. We have been content to let men know what are the precepts of Dharma. The Rishis proclaimed to the world the maxims they gathered from the revelations they had in the shape of the Vedas from the Supreme in their Yogic meditations. The people were content to follow the Rishis, and there the matter ended. This may seem to be indicative of a blind and slavish mentality in our people,—a state of enslavement which refuses

to investigate the truth, but is passively led into an implicit faith in their forefathers' good intentions and unselfish love of humanity. But, even in the West, examples are not wanting of men who put into practice a few valuable precepts learned from the great and the good rather than enter upon elaborate scientific inquiry into the basis or standards of ethics and casuistry. It is related that Dr Jowett, the late Master of Balliol was frequently in the habit of inculcating a few suitable ethical precepts to those who had studied under him according to his knowledge of the strength and weakness of each individual among them who came to him for help. In one case, he gave what we cannot help regarding as a simple and compendious body of seven precepts, a veritable Vade Mecum for the effective dealing with ordinary men and situations in life — "*Never tell, Never fear, Never fret, Never fail, Never spare, Never disappoint, Never quarrel*". Much meaning can be put into these sayings which appear to be as vague as they are wise. But apart from what they suggest, what they directly inform or inculcate is worth a good deal more than what one can learn from an elaborate investigation into different theories.



regarding the foundation of morality. Our Rishis, in their Smritis, have dealt with morality in the spirit of the late Master of Balliol when he responded to requests for practical guidance in life from his students in the college over which he long presided and commanded their universal respect and confidence. We consider that this method is the best for securing men's faith in the necessity and value of moral obligation,—that this method satisfies the pragmatist's test far better than the discussion of ethical values with a view to their settlement on scientific principles. In Europe, however, the reaction from pessimism took another and unexpected turn. It took indeed, a practical turn. The different basis and standards of morality which different philosophers insisted on each according to his own pet theory or fervent imagination, all became discredited. Hence the state in its omnipotence proclaimed, like Hiranyakasipu of old, that the system of moral maxims which it regarded as the best means of preserving its own power and prestige and extending its possessions or dominion over the rest of the world must everywhere be promulgated and taught. The ethical science and precepts which

have long been in vogue in every country and state in Europe are built upon the notion that each such country and state was best and highest of all and was entitled to receive the unquestioning allegiance of its subjects and the unquestioning approval of its policy, foreign and domestic. Patriotism is the *summum bonum* of all virtue and goodness. The patriotism, too, inculcated was to be deemed higher in its import and value according as it resulted in the utmost triumphs of the Government policy throughout the world. Upon this principle, the national policy is to be the most aggressive and unscrupulous of all the possible alternatives. Courage, pride, the spirit of cold and unbending calculation, the uncompromising pursuit of selfishness, the inexorable indulgence of the spirit of revenge,—in short aggressiveness systematically pursued and ending in triumphant acquisition of power, territory, and riches for one's own state and people was alone accepted as the basis of popular or "herd morality". This is simply the morality of Machiavellism reinforced by the evolutionary doctrines of Darwinism. It is absurd to say that the innate wickedness of the Huns of the Modern age is responsible for the prevalence of this

"herd" morality at the present day. It prevails in all modern states and among all Western peoples in particular. It came as the reaction of the pessimistic spirit which prevailed in Europe in the earlier period of the last century. The aristocratic and ecclesiastic ethical ideals of the mediaeval age and spirit of Europe have slowly receded into the background since the commencement of the Renaissance. The one chance for a truly ethical reform was when the voice of Pessimism was raised to elevate the prevailing standards of conduct and place them on the basis of reflection concerning the true meaning of life and its bearings on the eternal spirit dwelling in all human and living beings. Pessimism however, in its extreme forms, is bound to defeat itself. When it failed, European morality, so-called, came to be based on the purely animal and aggressive instincts in man. Nietzsche, the German philosopher has ever been deemed and condemned as the prophet of what has been called "Naturalistic Immoralism" as the basis of "morality" in the modern age. But his theory is ✓ a symptom of the spirit of the age, and not its inspiration and source. That spirit frankly assumes that man is an animal, not a soul or spirit. Hence,

man needs a cast-iron set of precepts based on the principle of the omnipotence of the state and the claim to the unlimited allegiance of the subject by which alone that principle can be maintained. All criticism of life, therefore, vanished. An artificial code of values and of precepts—or rather a single comprehensive precept—based on them, was forced on all subjects of the state as passive and submissive coolies of the governing power or party. All ethical values were to be tested according to the one rigid standard of acceptance and the application of it by the governing authority. Every kind of virtue was to be judged and subordinated so as to suit the one supreme basis and standard of the power and progress of the state organism. Everywhere, in consequence, we see the triumph of Darwinism and Machiavellism, pure and simple. Lord Acton stated the bare truth when he said that Machiavelli's *was not only a contemporary, but a constant, influence.*

modern conception of state-morality, and no wonder that it discards the traditions of religion and the religion of love and sympathy which the founders of religion have preached all over the world. To live for others, to forgive one's enemies and even love them for love's sake, to renounce wealth and power in order to elevate the soul of man by loving service to the destitute and the disinherited is an ideal and type of life which has place only in the relations of *individuals* belonging to a group, or society, or state, but not in the inter-relations between groups, societies, and states. *Inter-communal morality* has its scope narrowed to the aims of such groups, societies and states from moment to moment; and so success for the time being in the accomplishment of the impulses and purposes of the moment is the one supreme test applied to the conduct of them. Communal self-assertion and success is the supreme law of life before which individuals and individual conceptions of duty and morality must bend without the least compunction; communal egoism is the supreme law of life and morals. Moreover, altruism implies egoism even in the life and relations of individuals. For in order that the altruist may give and serve, there must be

the egoist to receive and be served. Hence, altruism can never be the universal ideal of conduct for all individuals.

We thus find ourselves on the horns of a dilemma from which there is no escape. Altruistic conceptions of morality command our emotional acceptance, but the intellect rebels against their practical difficulties and wants to find a more satisfying standard and basis of life. If we change our point of view and look at the groups, societies and states which confront us in the history of the past or the politics of the present, we see that pure egoism and the love of power and self alone guides the career of nations to their goal and destiny. In India, alone, the problem has found a solution,—and that solution is that the individual, the group, the society and the state are all equally subject to Dharma, as laid down in the Sruti and Smriti. The Rishis have placed the goal of life beyond the world,—in the purity and perfection of the soul of man. Even in western civilisation, we see thinkers are beginning to perceive the truth of what the greatest living Englishman of today—Mr. Bertrand Russell—has stated in the following pregnant language: “In order to promote life, it is necessary to value something

other than life " Social and political life are only forms of life within the world Hence, the Rishis have proclaimed that the Atman—"the One Existence only without a second"—is alone the true goal for man's aims and activities here It is its enchanting vision that has helped to maintain the "unity without uniformity" which has characterised Indian' society No modern formulas, such as "*the good, justice, value, pleasure, virtue, &c.*", can compare with the Supreme Self as the goal of man and his life here,—with the self realisation of the transcendent ego and its immanent and innermost nature of Bliss

Humanity has some of the features of an organism But nothing can be a worse error than to hold that society or humanity is *only an organism* and nothing more For this implies that the individual, severed from society, can have no life or purpose of his own, however noble his aim,—that all men must identify themselves with the social purposes and collective aims of the crowd or the state, however much the individual's conscience may disagree with them and even regard them as inconsistent with the essence of truth or the divine plan and purpose

in sustaining the universe. We rather prefer to hold that humanity and human society is a corporation, comprehending all men comprised in it and within the sweep of its loving embrace and having for its final aim and goal the promoting of every individual's inward and eternal bliss or perfection. Hindu society, while prescribing to every one born within its pale his own social function as subserving its structural unity and collective welfare has never called upon the individual to sacrifice the aim of final liberation from *samsara*, simply with a view to realise a purely secular aim as a social organism. To achieve this high spiritual aim of liberation from Samsara for each and every man, it is not enough for the individual to regard himself and to act as if he were only an inseparable part and parcel of the social or state organism to which he belongs. Each human being should *primarily* regard himself as a sojourner here wending his way to the realisation of the pure and perfect joy of the *interior* Self (Pratyagatman). The ideal social and political organisation is that which helps every one to work towards his realisation of the wonderful truth revealed in the Vedantic *Mahavakya*,—"Tat-tvam asi"



(*That art Thou*). The Hindu social organisation with its inseparable idea of Svadharma was created by Isvara in order to subserve this supreme purpose of our race, and it has never, in all its transformations hitherto, swerved from it. As Swami Vivekananda has put this idea, in his own immortal language,—“India is the land to which all souls must come wending their way to God”—the true and one test of man's spirituality. The test by which all material and mental and social evolution in the world has to be in accordance with the true thought that “the test by which material is judged cannot be given in the material itself.”

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## CHAPTER VI

### The great Alternatives in Conflict

THERE is generally a disposition in the modern philosophic mind to refuse to receive anything at all on trust, but to reason about everything so as to establish nothing. In India on the other hand we have learned from early days that reason has its limitations,—that it cannot establish two things on a firm and lasting basis,—viz, Dharma (the precepts of moral conduct or virtuous life) and Brahman (the existence of God or the one Supreme Self and Being as the basis of the universe). For these two ultimate foundations of man's life and destiny we must resort to faith in the Veda and reasoning upon its contents and teachings. The men who will believe nothing and take nothing on trust regarding these matters before applying their reason are, to use the language of a Western writer, "really, the most embarrassing people in the world,"—and they also, to use the words of the same writer further, "frustrate our own virtue,"—i.e., of many others, if not all. It is for

this reason that the Indian Scripture offers something for all as a basis for starting their rational inquiry into ethics and adjusting the teaching thus offered to the circumstances of the times and of each individual who has to play his part in them suitably and honourably. The Veda does not ignore distinctions in value, but adjusts them to all the types of character and circumstance and all the groups (and varieties of them) the activities of which have to be co-ordinated in social and individual life. There can be no assumption on a purely speculative basis regarding distinctions of value in conduct. In India, the supreme value of Dharma is made to lie, as already stated, beyond life,—in the realisation of the innermost Bliss of the Atman. But the entire body of subordinate distinctions—those which are the *means* to what is known as "Paramam Dharmam," the highest truth and law of existence, the knowledge of the self—can be *adjusted* by the established processes of argument, inductive and deductive. Of such value, we have examples in beauty, strength, "the good" virtue, egoism altruism &c,—some higher some lower, in the estimation of men according to their choice, training temperament &c. Every

race, every age, and every group or nationality has its own favourite type and kind of value. There are even many *individual* variations in the estimates formed of what constitutes true value. But we are not to suppose that all this implies such a state of uncertainty in men's estimates that we can never arrive at any ultimate truth and settlement. It is to avoid the ethical anarchy implied in such a conclusion that the founders of the Aryan society and religion laid down the unquestionable precepts of Dharma and the equally unquestionable aim and supreme goal of Dharma in "the one Existence only without a second" beyond all the realms of phenomenal life constituting the universe. This has been the source of the Indian's policy of peace—of live and let live—with all types of racial virtue, all forms of human life, and all forces making for the evolution of human genius and human social destiny. The European races and peoples, on the other hand, have ever been bent on strife with each other, and progress through struggle to their goal of social and state evolution. War is indispensable to them in order to reach their one aim in life—the perfection and omnipotence of the racial and national type of state life in the world.

If ever they value peace, it is only as offering the rest needed to prepare for further wars, racial advances, and state developments in the future. The present state of Europe offers positive proof of the truth just stated. Even in India, the present unrest is maintained as a prelude to future political developments of which no one can predict with certainty.

If improvement is to be effected in the future, the biological conception of human society and the state as an organism which is bound ever upon a mission of progressive evolution on Darwinian lines of struggle for existence and survival of the fittest must cease to command acceptance or gain further adherence in the practice of nations and their leaders. It is easy to reply that there has been as much effort for the preservation of peaceful relations and alliances among peoples and states as struggles among the same for political and economic ascendancy in the world. The truth, however, is that the state and ideal of militarism has never really come to a close. What mutual sympathy, aid and alliance has existed since the close of the Revolutionary Epoch has been meant only as a means to the further acquisition of imperial strength and ascendancy. No European

state or race, or nationality has ever slackened its efforts to maintain its strength unimpaired. We can never believe that the measures of its policy have ever been dictated for any state by any consideration of the just claims of others—much less of other states and races in Asia. There has never been such a thing as a state conscience. We have only to refer to the present relations of India with the Colonies and Dominions in the Empire of which we are said to form an integral part. The Indian Aryans and Dravidians wherever they go within these dominions are deemed as only fit to be segregated like the Pariahs and the Chandalas in India. The Aryans and Dravidians form the two great racial factors which have, in their past evolution as Indian castes and sub-castes, contributed to their long course of evolution and the settlement of the Indian racial type. Though, in the Presidency of Madras, some foolish types of leaders have come into existence who have professed to believe in the existence of a democratic Non-Brahmin type as distinguished from the Brahmin type which they regard as aristocratic or oligarchic, the observant world has ever been of opinion that the Indian type has ever been distinguished as *one* only. The

late Governor of Madras Sir M E Grant Duff, one of the most keen witted among the literary men in the West endowed with powers of observation and insight, once called this Southern India of ours the "most Indian part of India". The late Swami Vivekananda too,— though he did not always express the same view on the subject—challenged the possibility of making any distinctions between the northern and southern ethnic types in India, much less between the two types of culture today. If today we in South India, act as if there were such a difference of type, it is because we have rapidly learned from our Western teachers to neglect the qualms of the public and state conscience. In this matter, at least, we have gained the power of self determination on European lines of culture and ignored the precepts of Dharma inculcated by the Rishis in the most self assertive manner and with a self confidence which commands the conquering Western bureaucratic self-esteem. The truth is that this new political development in South India is one phase of the process of the Western conquest of the soul of the East of the process of maintaining the yoke which Western culture has established over the Indian. We hold no brief for any caste or

section of Hindu society Our "*Message*" is to serve the Rishis and their mission to the world of Aryan culture, which includes both Brahmins and other castes in its scope and services The Brahmins have never claimed to be the exclusive champions of Indian culture, as the aristocracies of other Eastern peoples They have ever cast their lots with the masses of our people, and none will be found more content to vacate their place or function if there is no future for them The future alone can declare for certain whether they are fit or unfit to continue the Mission entrusted to them by the Manu of being the "guardians of the treasury of Dharma" Their only concern in the past has been to preserve it by offering in themselves impressive examples of loyal obedience to Dharma Their value lay hitherto in having done this work to the satisfaction of the races of India of whom they have in every part of this land, formed an integral and inseparable part Spiritual power and purity has hitherto gone forth as from a dynamo to preserve the Indian racial and cultural types If the new types of western culture replace theirs for ever, we hold that it will be a great loss to humanity India has produced the type of the Rishi with its *creative*



impulses in art, literature, life—while the European type of Man has, since the mediaeval age passed, been mainly concerned with the "possessive" impulses leading to struggle with and exploitation of other races and communities of men. In fact India has been concerned hitherto chiefly in the effort to produce a higher ideal than the highest conceivable limit of humanity and its perfections,—to make man what he truly is, the Atman, the true "Superman," the *Jeevanmukta*, the man who has achieved liberation from the trammels of the life of the material world and of its impure impulses of greed and joy.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### An Indian Varna — Its formation and aims

**O**F late years we have had many so-called patriotic men and party leaders indulging in the idea that there is a Brahmin aristocracy or oligarchy in this country. None can be more unreal as a shibboleth for public advancement of any party or individual. For, the Brahmins are not men whom birth has "placed in a position of social importance," leading to the exploitation of other peoples' resources and property. This would be the case only if what they cannot gain by their individual merits, they are able to do by banding themselves together into an organised body. The Brahmins, on the other hand, have, as an integral part of the Indian social system, been assigned the duty or function of preserving the entire system of Vedic Dharma. Each Brahmin, as such, is supposed to bring with him the innate and ante-natal tendencies (*Vasanas*) which will enable him to take his place as a maintainer of Dharma.

It is not *intellect* that qualifies him for his function;—it is not even virtue, as commonly understood. But it is something whose import he brings with him and can only be understood truly by the manner in which it expresses itself in the effort to contribute to human advancement towards perfection. The objective social influences around him only help to develop or manifest the endowment of spiritual tendencies which he brings with him. It is not to be regarded as a mere means to the end of maintaining the Dharma,—for humanity has not provided it, nor has any social or political organisation been founded by purposive will with such an aim. It is the individual soul who, in its peregrinations through the universe, has—at a particular stage in its evolution—become possessed of its furniture of tendencies qualifying it for the performance of this aim in the life and progress of the corporation to which it belongs. This furniture of tendencies (that we have just spoken of as having become inseparable with the soul in its career through the world) produces a kind of spiritual or psychological speciality, qualification, and necessity in each soul which comes to reside among its Brahmin kindred here. Its value for the purpose of life,—proximate or ultimate—is inestimable, but it is not

based on any utilitarian sanctions. The person who has developed it cannot act *on his own initiative* when he comes into the world. But there are others who, like him, have come in here, but previously, and have qualified themselves to give him the initiative he needs by offering ample opportunities for the manifestation of the virtues, qualifications, and tendencies which he shares with them. He is a man with a spiritual personality developed for certain purposes with which humanity as an organisation or society has nothing to do. The endowment or furniture of tendencies (*Vasanas*) which each Brahmin (Kshatrya, Vaisya, and even Sudra) brings into the world when he is born marks him out *only as a personality* with peculiar features,—a fact whose imprint he bears along with those whom he lives and moves and has his being without at the same time bestowing on himself or on them a value which has a purely human significance, individual or collective.

At the same time, it cannot be denied that every Indian caste—the Brahmin, quite as much as the lowest of all in the scale,—possesses a *conscious* feeling of *proud* self-confidence and self-respect. Each member of an Indian caste has something of

this spirit of pride,—not merely consisting of self-conceit or vanity—but full of the consciousness of a worth which is in fact an inborn and inherent congenital possession and which is secure of its own place in the order and aim of the world's being. When trouble or misfortune occurs, this innate sense of worth acts as a shield against the scorns or aggressions of men. It never solicits the appreciation, the plaudits, the sympathy of men. It enables its owner to rise above all adventitious circumstances and to adapt himself to the environment,—and enables him to do so not by courting pity or help, but by turning out to be a possession making for courage, virility, and self-esteem and thereby absorbing all power of circumstance so as to enhance its own inner consciousness of dignity and strength. Secondly every one belonging to every Indian Varna has his special Dharma for which he has to devote all his energy. No one can neglect the progressive maintenance of his own special type of worth and aptitude for work. He *may*—and usually will—follow established conventions, customs, views, and values. But he need not do so; and he may, when occasion arises, even depart from them in order to reach a secure strength in the type or form of personality which he is here

to maintain, though he does not, as such, belong to an order or class seeking its own prestige, profits, or privileges. No caste in India can therefore be an aristocracy or oligarchy. Thirdly, each Varnà has its own sense of self-conscious self-reverence and therefore recognises the inequality—not the equality of men. Each Varna possesses its own special gifts of insight, refinement and courage,—buttressed all round only by the peculiar barriers within which the institutions of marriage peculiar to it are maintained,—also by various notions regarding mutual intercourse and inter-communication which are now-a-days brought under the comprehensive designation of Untouchability, only to suggest their condemnation.

Finally, there is no trace among any Indian Varnas or any individual thereof of that narrow and self-possessed individualism which is characteristic of the aristocracies of the West,—the love of class ascendancy or egoism as the motive of all public activity. For, the Indian knows that he has freely to pass from one Varna to another at each successive birth, in accordance with the measure of his activities during his present stay within any one of the various Varnas.

✓ Each Varna is a corporation existing not for its own purpose or profit, but forming a select class of indivi-

duals gifted with the pre-natal characteristics already insisted on only to elevate one and all to a due appreciation and performance of their own Dharma and to a higher status of existence after death. ✓

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## CHAPTER VIII

### The Origin of Indian Varnas

**I**N India, the conduct of men in life, social and individual, has, till recently in full measure, and even today to some considerable extent, been fully influenced by the Dharma contained in the Sruti and Smṛti and Dharma varies with the Varnas (i.e. the social groups) which unite together to form Hindu society and contribute to its stability through the faithful performance by each of its own special functions and duties. The *origin* of this system of Varnas has much exercised the human mind in recent times. Clever men,—and such men are usually unscrupulous—have usually brought a vivid imagination to bear upon the subject, and the extent of its soaring or diving power has often been mainly influenced by the amount of unscrupulous self interest of which it is capable when dealing with this topic with a practical, and not from a scientific, intent and purpose. Whatever may be the fate of their endeavours and the value of the conclusions they have reached, one thing we may be sure of, viz. that all



who have devoted their attention and endeavour to this great topic have ignored altogether the *origin* of the Varna system as given in our own sacred literature itself. Let us take the origin of the Brahmins as therein given, and that may be regarded as more or less typical and therefore conclusive as regards the origin of other Varnas, too. We learn that, *at first there were seven Brahmins*,—the Sapta rishis, as they were called. It is from them that *all* the Brahmin families of today derive their origin or *must* do so. They are, no doubt, today, *far more than* seven Gotras but these also have to admit in practice, and do admit, the spiritual superiority of the Sapta Rishis, as they are the revealers of the Seven Vyahritis or Vedic sounds corresponding to the seven higher worlds (or stages of development) of matter commencing from the earth in one or other of which the higher souls have to live before they complete their endeavours to gain their liberation from Samsara. We need not now inquire into the origin of the *Sapta Rishis* themselves—for it is not germane to the purpose on hand.

Why the Brahmins—and, like them, the other three Varnas too,—should not have been derived

from a few pristine ancestors (and their wives) is not at all clear. But our modern interested investigators usually ignored this account of their origin, and give their own explanations among which one is a constant factor, viz., the cunning of the Brahmin and his desire to maintain his social and spiritual pre-eminence in Hindu society. Of late however, a saner and more truthful spirit is discernible among investigators. The Brahmin's so called cunning and love of social preponderance cannot account for the *origin* of his Varna and class. It cannot even account, for its long and immemorial continuance. For human social institutions usually have a habit of passing away, and even passing away so completely as not to leave a track or trace behind them. Human social institutions continue only so long as they serve human needs and interests. Such needs and interests may either be what they were originally or in primitive times of which we have either no certain knowledge or only imperfect knowledge—or may have been influenced by the subsequent course of events in history. But all this refers to the *historical* processes of change or continuity which have passed over institutions and not to the question of their *origin*, with which we are now dealing.

Upon this question of origin, a writer in one of the current periodicals, Professor Perry of Manchester, has expressed a sane and rational view which brings him, in our view, into line with the account contained in our own *Sruti* and *Smṛti*, as above explained. Professor Perry rightly says that "the basis of generalisation should be an examination of the known facts." From an examination of "the communities that exhibit the lowest form of civilisation" he finds that "these peoples, wherever we find them; uniformly, wherever their culture is least touched by outside influences, display a society founded on the family." Again—"The evidence available goes to show that the earliest form of human society was founded simply on that of the family." Further, the family, everywhere among these peoples exhibits the same or similar characteristics. Prof Perry explains them as follows—"There is complete harmony, absence of violence or cruelty, complete communism, and mutual help. The form of marriage is monogamous, and the tie is for life. Authority does not exist, and decisions are taken by mutual consent," &c. That a few *families* existed at first, and that later those families formed "relationships other than those of juxtaposition and more or

less complete independence,"—and that thereby they formed a community or group or social division such as we find in the later societies and nationalities,—is exactly what we gather from the teachings contained in our ancient Vedic literature. Just as we claim that the Brahmin caste or Varna—and the same is true of other Varnas, too,—is derived from a few Rishi families, the Chinese claim, too, that they are descended from an original hundred families who settled on the bank of the Hoang-Ho. They were "an agglomeration of tribes each enjoying patriarchal self-government constituted of the elders, every one of whom must be a pater familias; and over all these tribes the sceptre is to be wielded by a supreme government, which simply maintains order and peace among them, without, however, interfering in their internal affairs." In India, however, both these "internal affairs" and the preservation of "peace and order" were regulated according to the principles of Dharma, and hence the Aryan society was able to preserve its influence for good wherever its influence prevailed. Every Indian class or Varna thus formed by the union of a few families at its origin was "a power-holding, directing, normal, mentally stable class"—and hence all stood upon a footing of durabi-

lity and equality, each possessed its own special characteristics and aptitudes and formed a type by itself, all together co-ordinated and bound together by the Dharma into a society characterised by "unity without uniformity," all needing each other's services and sympathies, while also aiming at a standard type of character and conduct leading to the spiritual goal to which the Dharma was intended to lead.

The establishment of the origin of Indian Varnas on a basis of fact in the manner above mentioned easily disposes of the many errors hitherto prevailing on this same subject. The late Sir Henry Maine was the first to point out that "nothing in law springs entirely from the sense of convenience." There is always something previously existing upon which the sense of human convenience or interest works later on, and it is this fact that brings about the degeneracy of institutions or of men. We must not ascribe to original or primitive circumstances, the characteristics developed in the course of the later adjustments of a corporation or an organism to changes in its environment. The Indian Varnas have changed a good deal in their course of response to changes of circumstance. But, it is still true as a Christian Missionary has candidly acknowledged, that "the organism which

existed three thousand years ago, is still living." The Indian institution of Varnas has persisted so long because there is some peculiarity in its origin, some peculiarity in its powers and methods of adjustment to its changing environment, some peculiarity about its goal and purposes that it has not shared with any other now existing. It is our eternal Dharma and the eternal author of it who holds it up as our standard bearer and leader that have maintained our culture and civilisation. The passing troubles and evils of to-day are all due to the intrusion of alien ideas or of alien people who cannot appreciate the virtues of our Indian races, religions, and civilisations. The present epoch of transition must pass away soon, and then the permanent side of our Vedic culture will unfailingly assert itself. The time must come when, in the words of a living English writer:—"the spiritual and industrial sides of social life should be released from the domination of the political state, and enabled to develop freely in accordance with their own essential needs." The idea of the omnipotence of the state, now prevailing, must cease, before the fruitful spirituality of the Indian people and their culture can once more re-assert itself in the affairs of mankind.

## CHAPTER IX.

### The Indian Varnas and society—their Dharmic aims and methods.

**P**ROF. J. S. Mackenzie of Bristol who recently travelled in India, has said, about what he calls "the Indian communities," that "it can hardly be denied that the sources of division are much more numerous than those of unity." Evidently, he is thinking only about the Hindus in saying so,—for he is comparing our social divisions with those of Plato and of Steiner which, however, he calls "the three aspects of the social organism" and regards as corresponding to the functions of various important parts of the organism of the human body. Both Plato and Steiner refer to the same parts of the human body, but they do not correspond completely in the two schemes as regards the functions ascribed. We do not propose to enter into details at all. We only refer to them here at all, for the reason that Professor Mackenzie mentions them side by side with what he calls "the Indian communities." No doubt, the Veda refers

to certain parts of the human body when mentioning our four Varnas and their functions,—viz., the face, the hands, the thigh, and the leg. But these are very different from those mentioned by Plato and Steiner,—the brain, heart and stomach in the case of Plato, and the nervous, circulatory, and nutritive system in that of Steiner. In the *second* place, Plato and Steiner (apart from minor differences) have only the nature and aim of *the State* within their view; but the social divisions mentioned in the Veda or the Vedic literature and the functions assigned to them expressly or by implication have no such reference, but are intended to establish the importance of the Dharma as a whole or the part which is assigned to each division of the social corporation as means to the gaining of the knowledge of the Supreme Being who has graciously created and is sustaining the universe in order to help all living souls to achieve liberation from the bondage of Samsara and enjoy the resulting delights of Self-realisation and God-realisation. In the *third* place, Plato and Steiner do not at all think of divisions or sections among the people of the state, but only of their functions; and, while doubtless they inquire how to produce a number of experts in each department of the work of the



state, they hold that every citizen "ought to have some share" in all the departments and functions of the State. On the other hand, in India, while there is no absolute rigidity in regard to the functions, in theory or practice, or even as regards the union of higher Varnas with lower,—no such ideal as the sharing of all men in all functions is either aimed at or extolled as the ideal. For the aim of the Veda or of the Rishis through whom it was originally promulgated and enforced by all accepted sanctions is not that of the efficiency of the Indian state or society in its relation to others, but the purely other-worldly one of the eternal joys of spiritual relation and perfection. Where the Indian sacred authorities tolerate or permit any encroachment by one class (or Varna) on the function or occupation assigned to another is where a person is unable to find his means of livelihood by his own specially-assigned function as the result of his birth in a particular Varna. Professor Mackenzie is much mistaken in supposing that there is absolute rigidity of function and occupation among all Varnas, and even among the "horizontal divisions" of each Varna or the subcastes, so-called. This is neither theory nor practice, nor is such a possibility to be imagined as practicable in

even the most absolutely-governed human society. Certainly the Indian Dharma has never contemplated it, as we have already stated above. At the same time, Hindu society regarded as its ideal of worthy endeavour the maintenance or attainment of as complete a separation as possible of the Varnas and of their occupations, and only—at least in theory—permitted as a means of avoiding the pangs of hunger and of destitution, their mixtures (*sankarya*)--i.e., through the intrusion of the males of the higher Varna into the lower in the fourfold vertical order of the arrangement by Varnas. There is also absolutely no Shastric prohibition of interchange of blood or function among the horizontal divisions of each Varna, or the sub-castes, though in practice the enforcement of such prohibition was resorted to out of a love of purity, not out of selfish love of exclusion for its own sake.

What we have said above should not be interpreted as meaning that there was no unity or cooperation among the various castes or sections of the Hindu community. The very fact of the distribution of the functions, and of their maintenance by the ruler as his own special Dharma or function among the *non-competing* Hindu communities led to the achieve-

ment of a consolidation or unity among the Hindu social groups and divisions and of the promotion of collective and individual welfare in the Hindu society and state. But these were not among the conscious and deliberate aims of the heads of the State or society. The authorities of the Indian State and society did certainly do their best to maintain the organisation needed for their defence against external enemies, for the protection of individual life and private property, for the administration of the rules of vyavahara (administration of law) among those who sought for justice at the king's hands &c. But all these things were done as the commands of the deity enjoining the Dharma as a means to the bliss of life in a higher world altogether beyond sense preception and not as a conscious aim of a state organism or even of an industrial organisation of society maintained for the secular welfare or progress of mankind. Such unity, strength, or progress as was achieved by the Indian State or society was *the unintended and indirect effect of the doing of the work assigned to one and all as Sva Dharma or spiritual activity* and was not accepted as a conscious political or social aim under the exigencies of conflict or co operation among the people of the same state or of different states in their

attempt to determine their international relations.

The course of speculation concerning the constitution of the Commonwealth is one which ever goes on without interruption among European scholars, thinkers, statesmen, and others. We have not only *ideal Commonwealths* (or *Utopias*) proposed by philosophers, but also proposals for the betterment of various parts of the existing machinery of the State in response to the changing aspects, and needs of the environment. We have no end of proposals for the reform of the House of Commons and the House of Lords in England. The British Radicals of modern England have even proposed the abolition of the House of Lords, and in fact there was no House of Lords during the Protectorate of Cromwell,—it was abolished as “mischievous and unnecessary.” The Socialists and Syndicalists have their own schemes for the organisation of a State or Commonwealth upon an improved model. The late eminent poet, William Morris, devoted the latter years of his life to the preaching of Socialism, and he laid out an Utopian scheme of his own in his “News from Nowhere.” Everywhere thinkers and even practical men are exercising their heads with schemes under which henceforth the affairs of men will be under the guid-

ance, and carried on with the active co-operation, of "experts" who will endeavour to avoid all desolating conflicts such as the recent world-war and provide for the maintenance of peace and prosperity so as to ensure human happiness and progress

From what has been said above, it might seem that, even though the Indian society with its system of Varnas may have been much misunderstood, it still has two serious defects,—viz, (1) that it is ever fatally disunited, (2) that it cannot procure "experts"; whose will and capacity will enable them to act as leaders of their own class or division or of the Indian society as a whole. As regards the *first* objection, the reply is that the mere *appearance* of disunity when seen from outside is not to be taken as indicating the absence of the *true* strength of inward unity. The unseen influences and forces which act upon men in life are often the strongest in determining the nature of its phenomena, and this is true of Hinduism and has contributed to its long continuance and the unwavering faith of its votaries in their destiny. Our belief is that all souls must take their birth in Hindu bodies before they can gain the bliss of immortality,—that the Divine Will has been truly revealed to us only in the Veda and Vedanta and that the truly

enlightened Gurus who are to enable the souls to cross the ocean of Samsara can only be found and recognised among the sages and saints of India by those who are fit to profit by their wisdom and teaching. As regards the second objection, these great and wise Gurus and Munis are the true leaders and "experts" who guide the destinies of those who form the Aryan (and Hindu) people and that those who follow their Svadharma with faith and firmness are the *lesser experts* who prepare and preserve the conditions needed for the true enlightenment and liberation from bondage of all who are ripe for the reception of the highest truth and the attainment of the innermost bliss of Eternal Love and Truth which is "the one Reality without a second." Further, our doctrine of Avataras, as explained in the Gita (Chap. IV. 5—8 and 1—3) clearly shows that the Supreme Being himself is the real leader of the faith known as Sanatana Dharma and that he incarnates again and again when, by efflux of time, it is lost or gets distorted in the practice of men and a re-assertion of the truth and the whole truth is required for the universe.

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## CHAPTER X.

### The true origin of Indian Varnas

**T**HAT, in the search for expert assistance in the guidance and control of the State, the thinkers of the West and all responsible statesmen and chiefs are thinking of the need for some practical scheme of distribution and classification of its inhabitants is clear not only from writers like Steiner already referred to, but also from the schemes of reform put forth from time to time for securing an improved class of men as members of the various houses or branches of the legislature and executive. Even the Socialists who are stated to support the dogma of the equality of men under their schemes of Democracy require one set of men for dealing with social and political questions and another for dealing with matters relating to the production of commodities and the rendering of industrial or commercial services, by means of education and the organisation of trade and exchange. Even American thinkers and writers, in spite of the fact that they claim to be the most

advanced of all democracies, hold that no purely popular election can secure the best men for the guidance of public affairs. Mr. Powers, the author of a recent work on "The American Era", has avowed that "no popularly elective body can ever be a body of experts" such as are needed at the present day. Hence, all are agreed that one branch at least of the legislature must be made to include some of the best representatives available from each of the great departments of human life and thought in order to form a competent advising body. In England, the reform of the House of Lords is now advanced to the point that Government itself have come forward with proposals for a reconstituted assembly in which only Royalties, and Spiritual and Law Peers will have a permanent, and all other categories of Peers will have only a limited, tenure. The latter section will consist of the Crown nominees, hereditary Peers elected by their order, elected representatives from outside who occupy eminent positions in literature, science, industry, trade, art, religion, &c.

It will be evident how complicated and artificial are all such schemes, and how soon they will become unsuitable in the societies of the West which rapidly change in consonance with the growing struggle for



existence and the exigencies of progress among men resolved to monopolise the resources of the globe and to contend for the supreme position of power among all communities. In India, on the other hand, we have in our Varnas social divisions, which are of such immemorial antiquity that it is impossible to claim that they either go back to those prehistoric ages when man was not yet differentiated from other species or to those in which he fashioned his own social institutions in accordance with the needs and exigencies of the moment. It is in fact, altogether impossible to ascribe our Varna classification in Hindu society to any purely secular motives capable of serving as the efficient cause for such an effect. M. Barth speaks of caste as "a question which I have purposely evaded as being hitherto unsusceptible of a satisfactory solution." He says further:—"I did not entangle myself in this question, because of its exceeding obscurity. In fact, we have already a Brahmnical theory of caste, in regard to which we should require to know how far it is true to facts before we venture on explanations which might very readily prove of no greater validity than a work of romance." Others—and especially *modernised Indians*, including some Brahmins but mostly "non-

Brahmins," so-called—feel no such scruples of conscience, and are prepared to prove not only that "the Brahmanical theory of caste" is *not* "true to fact," but that that theory is a *late* invention of the devil of self-interest and self-aggrandisement. M. Barth, however, is convinced that "they (the Brahmins) never formed a body governed by common interests" Now-a-days partisanship is *avowedly* the basis of all social and political activity, and so the numerous enemies of the Indian system of Varna divisions and of the Brahmins of to-day will not be disposed to grant the truth of M. Barth's observation regarding the Brahmans. The fact, however, is that Brahmans in the past were indented upon, like their successors of to-day, to be the teachers and expounders of Buddhism and other so-called "Protestant" religions which attempted to overthrow the religion which they professed themselves and of which they were the specially appointed "guardians" M. Barth says of Buddhism that "for a long while, they (the Brahmans) furnished the new religion with its chief teachers." The same is mostly true of the various other Agamic creeds and "Protestant" religions which rose later on in India. If our social division of Varnas, therefore, have remained and still possess

much, though diminished and diminishing, vitality, it is due to the fact that these divisions are not the artificial products of the working of complicated human motives of greed, self-assertion and exploitation of the weak by the strong, but have an immemorial origin and source for which we can only seek in the Vedas and the ancient Vedic literature. Professors Macdonnel and Keith say in their recent work, "The Vedic Index":—"It seems certain that in the Rig-Veda, this Brahmana or Brahmin is already a separate caste differing from the warrior and agricultural classes. The French scholar, De La Saussayae, even goes further:—"More especially among the Persians the same four Hindu castes are mentioned. From this we can naturally see that *this division cannot be the product of any specially Hindu development, but existed already in the oldest—at least Indo-Persian—times.*" If the Indian system of Varnas existed in the "*oldest times,*" we must ultimately trace it to the time of creation. Thus both modern secular science and the ancient Indian spiritual science of the Veda agree in holding that our system of Varnas is *not* an artificial product of any known or knowable human motives or social influences which can be traced to any indivi-

dual or coterie interested in bringing it into existence. It still retains some of its ancient vitality, because there is something in it which adapts itself to the constitution of human nature and enables it to fulfil the aims and ideals it has always had within its purview,—the ultimate liberation of man from the bondage of Samsara, or to use the pregnant language of Swami Vivekananda, the furnishing of facilities to “all souls wending their way to God.”

We do not see why this ancient social system with its Varna divisions should not continue to hold its ground in India. In the West, men are becoming alive to the necessity of organising some system of “class divisions.” We have referred, earlier in this section, to some of the various proposals now being put forth—those of Dr. Steiner, Mr. Powers, the Socialist writers (Mr. and Mrs. Webb, for instance, in their recent work, “A Constitution for the Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain”), and so on. Whether any system of social divisions will (or can) be newly brought into existence has yet to be proved. We have every reason to question its feasibility. Professor Perry, of the Manchester University, very properly says:—“The science of social psychology has yet to be born”—and, further, “we have not yet

succeeded in explaining the most elementary facts connected with our present day society' There is, thus, not much hope of our being able to profit by any Western example or teaching of whose validity we can be assured The divisions we have, therefore, will and must continue as long as they fulfil their original purpose, end, and aim, and even though we cannot trace their origin to such trustworthy and authentic knowledge of their ancient moorings in the thoughts and feelings of our primeval Hindu ancestors as will satisfy the modern mind We can only know the thoughts and feelings to be found in the Veda and the Vedic literature and they clearly show that, as already stated, our Varna Dharmas aim at the attainment of the eternal bliss of the Pratyag Atman (Inner Self) which is beyond the Material Universe and the worlds included in it,—the one Existence only without a second

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## CHAPTER XI.

### The Concept of Democracy, East and West

**H**OW does the ancient wisdom of India deal with the political life of man in society? In these days men make much of the existing democratic and representative Government as if it was a divine revelation granted only to the Teutonic and Anglo-Saxon peoples. The British Prime Minister declared the other day in the House of Commons that the introduction into India of the democratic system of appointing representatives to Indian Councils was an "experiment." We consider that it was in fulfilment of a "promise" made to the Indian people previously—made it must be admitted, while the world-war was yet in progress—that "responsible government" would be granted to India in the future. When a "promise" is made, its fulfilment becomes a matter of obligation. India awaits in full measure, the fulfilment of it, at an early date, or at least within a measurable time-limit. India.

however, wants the modern representative and democratic principle of government only because her *own* system of government upon a popular basis has been destroyed under the stress of foreign invasion and the strain of alien systems of Government. The ancient Indian system and order in politics had, as we shall show later, an ample and clear popular basis, though it was *not* based upon the false and lying principle of the equality of men, brought into vogue during the Revolutionary Epoch. "The modern world order," says Mr D B Leary in the *June* issue of the "International Journal of Ethics," "is but a partial order, it is but *mere external tidiness*." The world is being deceived by mere appearances. Even in the British system of government does public opinion mean anything beyond passive acquiescence in the doings of the person (or party) in power known as the Prime Minister leading his own chosen helpers or colleagues in the administration? Have the British people ever acted on their own volition and initiative and have they ever been able to *directly* nominate, or exercise control over the measures of the men who from time to time carry on the machinery of government? *In reality*, there is no government by

the people or by public opinion in Great Britain! There are parties and party leaders, and party funds and party news-papers. In the end, it is but bare truth to say that the British system of Government is carried on by a *narrow oligarchy* in its own interest and in what it conceives to be the interests of the British Nation and its empire. There is no doubt a mass of law, custom, and tradition governing the minds and consciences of these men, and to some extent their supporters also. But nothing in that mass can stand against the brutal and decisive *force of the transient interests, impulses, passions and panics* of the day as they reign supreme in the hearts of the governing oligarchy and party. As matters stand, Mr. Bertrand Russel is perfectly right in saying that "the essence of the state is that it is the repository of the collective force of the citizens." The police, the judiciary, the army and navy are the instruments of the party or government which directs and controls the so-called policy and power of Great Britain in the name, interests, honor and prestige of its people. This is the principle—the essence of the modern principle—of the omnipotence of the state in Great Britain and in all Western countries and civilisations.



Let us now refer briefly to the fundamental principle underlying the ancient system of Indian Government. Although monarchical in form the system of administration adopted in ancient India always aimed at fulfilling the wishes and aspirations

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— accomplish their ideal of a society without a sovereign or state, let them consult our system of Dharma and its rules for the promotion of peace and order among men without trenching upon each other's wishes, desires, principles, possessions, emotions and passions. This may seem incredible to many of us in Modern India. But, if we know from Parasara Smriti what

men were engaged chiefly in doing in the Krita-yuga, we may be more inclined than now to accept the truth of Bhishma's statement above referred to. The Acharya Kanda (sloka 23) says:—"In the *Krita-yuga*, tapas (i. e., ascetic practices) was the chief occupation of men; in the *treta-yuga*, the gaining of knowledge; in *dvapara-yuga*, the performing of sacrifices; and in *Kali-yuga*, the making of gifts." There must be a good deal of truth in these statements. India has long been, and is to-day, the paradise of the beggar. The amount of India's charity has no kind of sane or desirable relation to its resources. We rarely flinch when we see the beggar at our door, and the consequence is that everybody gets robbed to the detriment of the country and nation and the moral ruin of the men who avail themselves of the Indian's Kali-yuga temperament and instinct of giving away something to every one who takes up the role of asking for a gift. So, the Indian of the Krita-epoch cultivated the practice of ascetic ritualism of all kinds and the endurance of hunger till he came to live on leaves and roots, and so on. Hence, there was no need of property and possessions and no need also of any system of government to protect person or property.

Such a state of things, however, was characteristic only of a particular epoch and state of evolution in Indian history. Bhishma goes on to state that, in course of time, the practice of asceticism brought the people to such a condition of low vitality and enfeeblement (dainyam param) that they became subject to delusion and ignorance and that these in turn produced poverty and bred avarice in the hearts of men and thus they lost all sense of the distinction between virtue and vice. All Vedic Dharmas declined,—and it is said that the Devas had to starve for want of offerings at sacrifices and carried their complaints to Brahma, the member of the Hindu Trinity who has to perform the function of creating the world. Brahma was then induced to teach the world the science known as Niti-Sastra. The art of government (Danda-Niti) formed a portion of Brahma's teaching. Details are given regarding the line of succession among the teachers along which the knowledge of the art of government reached men and became useful to them. Prithu was the first ruling sovereign and potentate among men and learned the art of governing from Sukracharya. Whether or not these facts can be relied on as authentic no one can say. The fact remains that men wanted a ruler

and an art of government in India and that the old halcyon period when there was neither ruler nor art of government had passed away for ever.

The Indian art of government taught as its first principle that the chief function of the ruler is to protect the person, property and function in society by which a living wage is earned which appertain to every one of his subjects. The ruler must grant this protection according to the eternal principles of Dharma. If a ruler simply took taxes and offered no protection according to the principles of Dharma, he was a traitor to God and man and must be dethroned and dismissed like a leaking and therefore unseaworthy vessel by its owner. The ruler must be always true to his word and unceasing in his endeavours to protect and serve his subjects' interests. He must be free from all thought of gaining any personal advantage and from all impulses of anger or disdain. The owners of great wealth and possessions are entitled to receive special protection, while at the same time the ruler must regard all his subjects as equally entitled to his protection, mercy, and affection. He must especially provide himself with a consultation council of elders and a judicial committee of experts

all of whom must be well-trained in the arts of government and ratiocination. Without the aid of two such assemblies, the ruler can never accomplish his functions in a manner calculated to secure the aims of his position in the world or the contentment and happiness of his people.

In what has been above stated, there is nothing calculated to disturb the trend of truly democratic sentiment or aspiration among modern Indians or others. The existence of councils composed of esteemed men, the persistent demand that the ruler should always consult the interests and desires of his people, and last but not least, the recognition—as a permanent feature of the Indian art and science of Danda-niti—of an inherent right in the Indian people and their leaders to overthrow a monarch who ignored his people's right to protection and justice according to Dharma at his hands,—all these show that ancient India had *the essence of a truly democratic government* though they may not have had in full measure, all the details of the elective system by which a modern representative, and democratic system of government claims—in mere external form—to rest on the basis of public opinion and popular approval.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### The functions of the State.

**A**CCORDING to the Indian science of government (*Danda-Niti*), the state has two functions,—

- (1) *Rakshana* or the preservation of order, peace, and functional distribution of social service; and
- (2) *Vardhana* or the progressive amelioration of the condition of the people through the increase of territory, wealth, population, &c. As Kamandaki, however, teaches us, “the preservation of order is more important than the progress made in the acquisition of (fresh) resources.” Thus, while our Dharma does not ignore the value of political progress through advancing and multiplying the material resources of the state, it holds also that the maintenance and increase of the power of the state outside its own borders through war or diplomacy has only a subordinate place and that its main aim is the preservation of order, peace, and stability through the putting into force of the injunctions of

**Dharma** The reason for observing this limitation in the policy and methods of the State is well stated by a great living writer. Professor Bertrand Russel says —“The external activity of the state—with exceptions so rare as to be negligible—is selfish. Sometimes selfishness is mitigated by the need of retaining the goodwill of other states, but this only modifies the methods employed, not the ends pursued. The ends pursued, apart from mere defence against other states, are, on the one hand, opportunities for successful exploitation of weak or uncivilised countries, on the other hand, power and prestige which are considered more glorious and less maternal than money. In pursuit of these objects, no State hesitates to put to death innumerable foreigners whose happiness is not compatible with exploitation or subjection or to devastate territories into which it is thought necessary to strike terror.” The Indian princes and the Indian sages, therefore, were perfectly justified in enjoining limitations on the aims and methods of the state, and especially in insisting that it must maintain and value permanent relations of alliance and peace with all others and take speedy measures to restore them when they are broken. The Mahabharata distinctly states as follows (*Raja-*

*dharma*, Chapter. 68) :—"Brihaspati has taught that a wise king (*i. e.*, State) should always avoid the carrying on of war from a mere desire for increase of territory. He must acquire territorial gains only by three methods,—viz., by negotiation, by gifts (in return for more suitable and useful regions), and by producing alienation and breaches (of peace) between other states (so as to advance his own interests)."

The State in India has always, therefore, made *Rakshana* (otherwise preservation of internal order and the righteous governance of the people according to the precepts of Dharma) the main aim of its endeavour. The Mahabharata lays down that there are no less than seven *angas* or limbs of the state to whose proper maintenance the king has to direct his attention by his wise measures of policy. Those seven limbs of the state are:—(1) the king, (2) ministers, (3) the treasury, (4) the executive, (5) subordinate allied chiefs, (6) cities or urban and suburban areas, and (7) villages or rural areas. (*Raja Dharma*, Chap. 68, slokas 69 and 70). The Mahabharata says immediately after that "the king must, in directing all his endeavour and energy



to the task of protecting the state, regard these seven parts of the state as his own limbs, thereby identifying himself with the state." (sloka 70.) Indian political science has also bestowed special attention on the duty of maintaining the wisest and most intimate relations, economical and political between the residents of urban and suburban areas and those of villages and rural areas. In the same chapter, the Mahabharata says that "the king must arrange for bringing to his vicinity the seedlings of various grains," and thereby secure their distribution among suburban and rural areas and the ample and sufficient production of food-products of all kinds for his subjects' needs. While thus rural and local areas are left wisely to themselves in the Indian system of polity, their mutual relations and their relations with the urban areas were cared for and arranged through the *central* "executive" authority subject of course to the wise guidance of the "ministers." The ministers and the executive formed the chief source and cause of the state's wise guidance and organisation, but they never interfered with the self-determination of the village inhabitants in the direction of their own internal affairs. Sir Henry Maine calls all Eastern states 'tax-taxing'. We have

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just seen how mistaken this view is. No doubt they took taxes, and the Mahabharata (in this same chapter 68 of the Raja-Dharma) states that the king should limit his taxes to one-sixth of the entire annual income of his subjects, use them but purely and entirely for their own protection (sloka 27). The policy of the central authority was never intended to promote the exploitation of the country's resources for the promotion of any interest, community, group, or nationality abroad, but for the protection and maintenance of sound economic intercourse between the village and the town areas. The villages &c., were also responsible for the payment of the one-sixth part of their income for the use of the central authority.

Thus, the Indian state had no need to maintain a costly central executive and revenue service department for the collection of revenue. The collection was easily made by the inhabitants of the rural, suburban, or urban areas, and the so-called "executive" in the Indian state had only the very light duty of taking charge of the collections and remitting them to the king's "treasury." The "executive" (or the *Danda*) was neither a numerous nor

a costly service, as we know from the history of our own time even in recent years, and certainly it was not made so enormously costly as it is now from its having to be recruited from Great Britain in accordance with what are conceived as the *so called* interests of the Empire. We certainly do not object to a "slight" recruiting from Great Britain for the Civil Service. But it must be "slight" indeed, and not at all stand in the way of the constant and progressive increase of the recruiting from India itself. Why should "the spirit of anxiety and uncertainty prevail in the Service,"—because a larger number of qualified Indians can now be found to take the place of many who were formerly recruited from Great Britain? Why should "the decline of candidates (in Great Britain) be regarded as a deplorable symptom? Why should British journalism demand that 'the British service in India must not only be maintained at its old strength and in the old position of security it must be recruited from young men of the stamp of those who made it a triumph of administrative genius?' India has always been able to produce men capable of any kind of 'triumph' in administrative matters and possessing

“administrative genius.” It is because, through the policy of the Indian Civil Service recruited from Great Britain, the central executive authority in every Indian province interfered with, and practically destroyed, the ancient village and suburban (or even urban) political life and organisation, that the multiplication of various central “departments” has taken place, and the administration has become so enormously costly, and unsuitable to the country’s needs and resources as we see it to be at the present day. There is a good deal of cry now going on for “retrenchment.” But every one knows that there is much of unreality about it. The Inchcape Committee has not yet sat, or even arrived,—but already there is this loud outcry in the House of Commons about “maintaining the British service in India at its old strength and its old position of security.” So long as our own village and suburban or urban self-governments are not reconstituted and their old functions of police and judicial protection along with other functions relating to agricultural, communal sanitary, and educational matters are not restored. India’s finances and taxation must remain in their present deplorable and degrading condition. India’s slave mentality will remain a permanent feature of

Indian moral character, and we can never become qualified to exercise those principles of self determination and freedom which have been declared to be the "birthright" of all peoples and communities and even groups industrial, racial, or purely social. It is as easy to shed crocodile tears at the political helplessness and inadequacy of resources of the Indian people as to speak, in the pathetically Lloyd-Georgian style to which we have become accustomed of late, of "the gifted race on which we have conferred self government." India has no self government now. "No conferring" of self government is, indeed, needed! Hands off! What is wanted is the practical abolition of the central administrative departments constituted within the last 50 (or sixty) years at least in South India, and the restoration or revival of the system of rural and suburban self determination prevailing in the "eternal" and still surviving villages of India, with all the functions once appertaining to it, so that they may go on fulfilling the needs of our people and enabling them to recover their ancient position, strength and glory among the civilised races of mankind.

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alive. All are borne along by the stream of current party shibboleths and the necessity of preserving party supremacy unimpaired in the determination of state policy and state measures.

Let us now turn to India—to that ancient India where the eternal principles of Dharma (and Danda-Niti or Aryan science and art of government) had sway. Let us see how public opinion contrived to exhibit itself and had its full share of influence in determining the measures and policy of the king,—i. e., the State. We shall turn to the Mahabharata again and again as to a mine of extensive resources in the shape of information on the present subject. In the *first* place, the "*Council of Ministers*" has already been mentioned as one of the "seven limbs" of the government. The Mahabharata says:—  
 "Among the Ministers there must be learned Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Brahmins all full of wisdom and well acquainted with the art and science of government. The king must first ascertain the views of Brahmins well acquainted with the *Niti-shastra* (the science of polity), then he must learn the views of Kshatriyas who are fully acquainted with (the same) Niti, and then he must know the views of Vaisyas

and Sudras who know the Shastra and are interested in the welfare and prosperity of the State" (*Raja dharma*, Chap. 68, slokas 15 and 16). We thus see that the Council of Ministers was composed of the most esteemed and representative men of *all Varnas*. Such men are very different from the party leaders and party-magnates who carry on the Government of the day in Great Britain and elsewhere in Western countries. The so-called Ministers today blow hot and cold according to the interests and conditions which loom big from moment to moment, and even according to the foaming gusts of passion and the ferments of disappointed, but soaring, ambition that rise to the surface of affairs purely through the persistent and unscrupulous agitation maintained by unprincipled men. How the pre-war opinions and conduct of British public men are widely different from those which emanate from them in regard to the political self-determination of India are matters of public notoriety today. Moreover, let us quote what even a man like Mr Lloyd-George who is at the head of the government of that British Empire has to say regarding the British officials of the Indian Civil Service who exercise authority in India:—"their every word a

command, every sentence à decree." No doubt, he also adds—"accepted willingly by the people with trust in their judgment and confidence in their justice and their fairness, which ought to be the pride of their race." Then, why is it that the Congress commands so much public support and public confidence ! We remember reading in Hunter's *Life of the Earl of Mayo* that that nobleman, when he was Viceroy in India, expressed the opinion that the district officers were often "tyrannical" in their dealings with the people. No doubt, there has been much improvement since, but still there is much that is undesirable and even arbitrary in their conduct of district and local affairs, and our people have not come by their own even in such matters as primary education, village police and sanitation, abkari administration, rural agriculture, &c. The manner in which the settlement of land revenue is conducted from one period to another has become a by-word in the mouths of men. Still more irregular and unsatisfactory is the manner in which the question of granting remissions of revenue is treated by the Civil Service officials concerned from time to time. The memories of the scandals of the Tanjore Settlement and Remission agitation during the black Grant-Duff



quinquennium remain with us as an ineffaceable record of evil rule. It is easy to see in what sense certain methods and principles of Indian bureaucratic rule are "accepted by the people" here, in spite of the blatant assertions so satisfactory to the narrow mind and aims of a Lloyd George or a Curzon—not to speak of the lesser spirits who rule within their own smaller spheres and grooves of unmanly self assertion and self aggrandisement. How different was the case of the 'ministers' and 'executive' in the ancient system of Aryan rule! In the *first* place they must all be acquainted with the Indian science and art of government and must properly advise the King and carry on his state's affairs in accordance with the principles of *Niti*. We do not at all object to Mr Lloyd George's statement that the "responsibility the British have undertaken in India is a "sacred trust" and a 'high destiny'. But we deny that the British officials in general who constitute the Civil Service Bureaucracy have always or truly so regarded it. Mr Lloyd George himself speaks of his determination 'not to deprive it of its functions or its privileges'. People who are conscious of discharging a "sacred trust" or a "high destiny" have never been known

to care for the petty emoluments, gains, and pensionary doles of office and ought to set aside their purely personal interests and disregard even transient personal disabilities in order to place the permanent interests in their charge on a permanent basis of beneficence to the people at large. Why, then, do we hear this plaintive cry from the Civil Service officials regarding the insufficiency of their 'pay, pensions, privileges'? Let us rid our mind, then, of all cant and hypocrisy?

The Mahabharata again, throws a flood of light on the practice of the principles of popular government in Ancient India when it refers to what it calls "Sila," as that by which the whole world is gained over to the cause of the state and to the acceptance and approbation of its policy and methods. We translate three *slokas* of Rajadharma (Chap 124) — "Sila is stated as consisting in not maliciously plotting against the interests of any and every section of the people either in action, or even by thought or word, and in conferring on them all sorts of graces, benefits and gifts. Whatever is not beneficial to others, what is only indicative of the ruler's power, prestige or brute-strength in action,

and whatever the ruler will have later on to be ashamed of (on account of its injustice or injury to the people's interests) should not be done under any conditions. Only such measures must be undertaken and by such methods as will secure popular approbation and commendation in their (voluntary) assemblies or public meetings." In the very next sloka, the Mahabharata states that "even if a ruler who violates the principles of *Sila* attains to prosperity sometimes, he will not enjoy it long, but will speedily fall into ruin, root and branch." Here we see how the ancient Indian state not only encouraged the people to hold popular meetings and assemblies for expressing their opinions on public policy and the measures of the government, but never punished their leaders or representatives for agitating public interests and grievances. Professor Bertrand Russell says truly: "Institutions cannot preserve liberty unless men realise that liberty is precious and are willing to exert themselves to keep it alive." Modern states and statesmen, in their dealing with dependent and mandatory peoples introduce freedom with one hand and coercion with the other; they assert the former in the admirable language of speculative theory or principle, but deny

it in practice when the people proceed to avail themselves of the promised boon by subjecting them to confinement within the dungeon-walls of the prison and by other measures of coercion injurious to health of mind and body. In all modern states the vastness and power of the state as an organisation is the most serious and dangerous of the possible impediments to popular liberty and the popular will ! How different were the conditions of the ancient Indian state under the operation of the principles of *Sila* ? In our view, *the substance of popular freedom was secured* under the ancient Indian system through the promotion by the state itself of voluntary popular assemblies and even voluntary organisations for the promotion of various interests of business, religion, &c., on which the people of India then set a value. State policy and state interests did not suffer thereby, but were to secure for themselves the strength and glory derived by its endeavours to promote public beneficence and from its incessant attempt to base itself on the support of the will of the people. What a startling contrast to Modern Imperialism, its aims and methods ?

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## CHAPTER XIV

### Political Power and Political Authority.

**P****OLITICAL** *power* alone can belong to the people,—*not political authority* This is true even of modern democracies, where numbers are invested at least in theory, with a sanctity which is thought justifiable to an extent not attaching to an individual or a few “The voice of the people is the voice of God,” and the voice of the majority represents the voice of the people Hence votes are given to all people who possess certain qualifications, and counted at the polling booths in order to find out who is to *represent* the people and their interests and views in the assembly It is this assembly and those who guide it or carry out its mandates that exercise *political authority* in the name of the state and people whether in internal affairs or foreign relations

This system of government by the people is *essentially faulty*, even though invented by the

genius of the Anglo Saxon race which is now paramount in its influence over the destinies of mankind. Numbers—the mere consulting of majorities and counting votes to gain a majority—can never enable us to attain the highest standards of state policy. Numbers can only bring strength—not justice or humanity, or any real excellence of any kind—to a state in pursuing its aims or even in setting its standards of public policy. We have already said that in modern democracies, each man—i. e., each voter, “counts for one, and none for more than one.” Under such a system, we find that state policy and state affairs tend to be guided by men who care only for power, prestige, and for “progress” in the exploitation of the world’s territory and resources. The so-called “experts” in politics are mere adventurers who rise to a brief tenure of office and authority by flattering the lowest instincts of mobs and majorities—their instincts of “earth-hunger,” their love of pomp and prestige, and their vulgar passion for ascendancy over all rival groups and communities. It was expected that the disasters and ruin caused to mankind by the late barbarous world-war had produced a love of peace, justice, and humanity among “civilised” men in the West and would lead to fair dealing

between nations in the future determination of all international and inter-state relations. Such an expectation has been altogether falsified by what has taken place in the Genoa and Hague Conferences, and also by the *impasse* reached at the recent Conference of even the "Allied" states of Western Europe in London. Moreover, even within the British Empire itself, we witness the rise of a "*new school of constitutionalists*" in the so-called *Dominions* of the Empire. "They are all for 'equal status' in the Empire and for separate representations of the Dominions at International Conferences" (*vide The Nineteenth Century and After* for July 1922—Article, "Canada and the Empire"). They hold that the Dominions should have an "equal status" with the United Kingdom (or Great Britain) in determining the foreign policy of the Empire. They challenge Mr. Lloyd George's demand that "the British Foreign Office must be the instrument of the foreign policy of the Empire." They demand not only complete autonomy in internal affairs and full power to amend their own constitutions, but that they should deal with foreign nations as a sovereign power, settle questions of peace and war for themselves, and appoint their own ambassadors to foreign

states with a status equal to that of those who represent the "Mother-country" (so-called). The secret story of the Washington Conference has not been revealed to the world. But we should not be surprised to be told that the hand of Great Britain was to a large extent forced by the persistence with which Canada favoured "from the first" the American policy and proposals for Disarmament. We are also told that, at the last Imperial Conference, the Canadian representative, Mr. Meighen, "insisted upon the abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese treaty without regard for the interests and preferences of Australia and New Zealand," and that Mr. Smuts (of South Africa) "discovered a grievance in the failure of the United States to invite representatives of the Dominions to the Disarmament Conference," and was warmly seconded by influential public men and Journals in Canada. When these Dominions secure powers of independent action in regulating their relations with foreign countries and a separate representation in the League of Nations without consultation with the British Cabinet in London, it will surely become difficult to maintain the diplomatic unity of the Empire. If the tendencies towards self-assertion, now faintly formed, or in their merely inci-



ipient stages of formulation or demand, develop in the future, even the internal unity and strength of the Empire will become a matter of concern to its leaders, even if we do not go so far as to say that they will be imperilled so as to bring on something like the state of affairs which led to the secession and independence of the United States in the Eighteenth Century

✓ A democracy constituted by the merely numerical strength of its "qualified voters so called, can never be trusted to be governed in its public aims or policy by other than the vulgar considerations already mentioned, and this must result ultimately in strife and disruption. We have given abundant reasons for this view above and we can see how reasonable and well founded is the view expressed by a living American author Mr Powers—that "no popularly elected body can ever be a body of experts" The 'experts', so called who figure prominently in world politics at the present day are seen never to care for the lasting welfare and interests of the race, but only to stir the passions of the mob and procure the satisfaction arising from the attainment of military triumphs and extended dominion abroad. Ancient

India, on the other hand, never wanted such *elected experts*—elected that is through the counting of votes and the obtaining of mere majorities. The people—i. e., such of the people as had a knowledge of the distinction between good and evil and could subordinate the lesser for the larger good and even the good of their own community for the good of mankind as a whole, the men who had true faith in *Dharma* as revealed by the sages—alone expressed their views in popular assemblies (or *Sabhas*) and led public opinion so as to influence the public policy of the ruler and his ministers. There was no electioneering caucus campaign, or tactics, and there was no ballot-box for casting the people's vote. Public opinion was formed on a basis of practical reason and divinely-revealed (and not merely conventional) maxims of eternal morality, and so became invested with an irresistible power and sanctity in the views of all who exercised authority in the state, including the council of the ministers. The Council of Ministers, too, were chosen by the monarch as *representing* enlightened (and Dharmic) public opinion among all sections of the community, but *not elected by a majority of votes* thrown into the ballot box. It is not numbers, but character, that had weight.

in determining the trend of public opinion or of the public policy which obtained its support. The Cabinet of Ministers and the members of the consultative assembly were all men who had gained the respect and confidence of the several sections of the community and knowledge of their needs and feelings.

The Mahabharata lays down the composition of the consultative assembly in the following terms:—*“Four Brahmins, learned, full of strong common sense, self-restrained and pure; eighteen Kshatriyas endowed with strength of will and body and trained in the art of war (the use of arms), twenty-one Vaisyas, owning abundant wealth, three Sudras, of disciplined and decorous demeanour and established honesty of purpose, and one Suta (charioteer in caste) of 50 years of age, well versed in the Veda, Dharma-sastra and Puranas, possessing strength and resource to meet emergencies, &c.”* (Rajadharma, Chap 85). Thus the assembly contained 47 members *truly representative* of all that is best in the differentiating qualities of the men of the various castes and nothing like the unwieldy, noisy quarrelsome crowd *often* totally impervious to all steadiness in principle and even sense of decorum.

which modern legislative assemblies prove to be under the influence of excitement or the rankling sense of communal injustice or hatred. The same authority, in the same context, also mentions a cabinet of eight ministers only over whom the king is to preside when taking secret counsel in all state affairs. The ideal of the state is always "to protect the (true) interests of the people in accordance with the divine will (*Dharma*) as revealed in the Veda and other Vedic sources. It must be added that the Cabinet of Ministers, too, must be composed of men of various castes, for the commentaries point out an ancient tradition that it must contain 4 Brahmins, 3 Sudras, and 1 Suta, thus making up the number 8 already mentioned. The insistence, times without number, of the importance of a complete knowledge of Dharma in all ministers and members of the consultative assembly, and of the practical realisation of the principles of Dharma as the aim of all state policy shows that nothing was more distant in the minds of the men and rulers of Ancient India than the exploitation of groups of men within or of communities abroad. Besides, ancient Indian states never tolerated the modern state-ideal of allowing

✓ The rich to become richer and the poor to become poorer. While the king as representing the power and majesty of the state was never permitted to indulge in whimsical and thoughtless acts of tyranny he could always *legally* appropriate any superfluous accumulation or enormous store of individual wealth for the commonweal, thus destroying all great undue inequality of possessions among his subjects. Enormous inequalities of wealth can only generate ill will and hatred among the people. The state must or may appropriate any prodigious amounts of property owned by individuals, but *must not retain it* for advancing its own power or authority at the expense of the people and even in violation of the precepts of Dharma as it will feel tempted to do when it becomes possessed of immense extra resources and possessions. The state must never be actuated by merely "possessive impulses" but must always aim at raising the ideals and standards of popular life by promoting virtue, knowledge, art and good will among them and enabling them to share equally in all the elements of greatness and happiness essential to the national welfare. Professor Bertrand Russell says truly — "Political institutions have a very great influence upon the dispositions of men and women,

✓ and should be such as to promote creativeness at the expense of possessiveness " Exploitation abroad and prestige within are the aims of the modern state in maintaining its power and status in the world, whereas the ancient Indian state framed its institutions and its policy solely with a view to promote the lasting interests and stable conditions of popular well-being in accordance with the divine will as revealed in the  
Dharma-sastras.



## CHAPTER XV.

### The State and the Principle of Equality.

THE Indian Dharma and State, while requiring that the king and his ministers should grant protection to the person and property of all citizens, have never accepted the central and cardinal principle of modern democracy—viz., that all men are equal, that, therefore the state must accept its logical consequence that “every man counts for one, none for more than one”: and that “*the will of the greater number shall prevail, even if in error, over the will of the most intelligent of minorities*” On the other hand, our Dharma recognises the essential truth of the doctrine of inequality in its classification of Varnas and functions as the basis of the social and political corporation known as the state. It does not accept the Western idea that the collision of human interests and the crossing of human purposes or activities cannot be avoided and that the individual can be protected by the state against encroach-

ment by others only by admitting the doctrine of equality above enunciated—the doctrine that all men's purposes, interests, and activities are of equal importance and must receive equal recognition and protection, owing to the existence of equal "natural rights" in men. We have already pointed out that, in the ancient Indian State, full recognition was given to the fact that all citizens had freedom to express their voice in their popular meetings and to indicate clearly to the ruler whom they regarded as their fittest representatives and spokesmen in the king's consultative assemblies. But our Dharma denied that all citizens can claim the same *value* for their views on matters of public interest and importance. In modern state all qualified citizens—*i. e.*, all who have votes—are supposed to be entitled to claim *equal value* for their opinion and judgment on public matters and hence all decisions on such matters are decided by counting votes so as to obtain a majority. In casting votes into the ballot-box, there is a recognition of *universal equality*, and it is in accordance, with the will of the majority thus determined that ministers are chosen to carry on public affairs. This is the essence of the ideal of a



modern democratic state, and was altogether denied and repudiated in the ancient Indian democracy. Nothing can be more mischievous and more opposed to the true moral and social progress of humanity than the modern creed of democracy that any one man is as good as any other in regard to the formation of a judgment on matters of public and social welfare. Nor is it true that in all matters the modern states—even the most democratic of them—act up *in practice*, to that ideal. For, we have differences in various public and private rights of individuals—as for instance those of the nobility (in England) as contrasted with the commoners, those of men as contrasted with women of capitalists as contrasted with labourers of adults as contrasted with minors &c, still there prevails an idea that “*natural rights*” are the same for all. Nothing can be more absurd than to suppose that in actual practice the citizens voting at elections in modern states are equally *capable* of judging of the merits of the persons and policies which attain to prominence in public affairs from time to time. We deny—the Indian Dharma has always denied—the sacredness of the doctrine that the voice of the majority must

prevail in the determination of the policy or constitution of the state. Nothing can be more absurd and false than the belief on which that doctrine is based, *viz.* that all men are equal and each counts for one and no more than one, in the body politic. As men are not equal morally intellectually or physically, they cannot be placed on a footing of equality in public matters—they have not an equality of natural public or political rights. John Stuart Mill held that 'equal voting is in principle wrong'. The late eminent teacher and philosopher, T. H. Green rightly held of every citizen that if he is to have a higher feeling of political duty (than that of merely receiving protection in the exercise of his rights of person and property) he must take part in the work of the state. There are various ways in which this citizen can be enabled to take part in the work of the state and influence that work and already we have mentioned some of them as having been fully and practically given effect to in the practice of the ancient Indian state. But we cannot agree with Green when he says that he (the citizen) must have a share direct or indirect by himself acting as a member, or by voting for the members of the supreme or provincial assemblies in making and maintaining

the laws which he obeys " For, all citizens are not equally qualified to "act as a member or vote for the members of the supreme or provincial assemblies" which are entrusted with the work of legislation and control over the executive

If all men are guided in forming their opinions, or determine their activities, by a right perception and understanding of what is in consonance with reason or even self interest, the principle of equality in political rights—or even of giving one vote to each citizen as a means of exercising that principle—will not prove the great mischief it has proved to be since it was advocated by Rousseau or by the Jacobin party who were his first disciples The truth, however, is that ordinary men are almost always governed in their activities by their merely unthinking passions transient impulses and even chance associations or illusions of a kind they would soon be ashamed to avow The majority of men too, have not the education and training needed to discover (or adjust) the right means for the accomplishment of suitable public aims When questions of high public policy involving national honor or glory or advancement crop up, how can we be justified in

supposing that the average voter, even in a country like England, France, or Germany would be able to view it in all its diverse and comprehensive bearings on the present and future welfare of the nation or of humanity at large? Even a great public man—as, for instance, the late President Wilson—has often *proved a most untrustworthy guide or even a sham* of the most inconceivable kind when conceiving, planning, or putting into execution a great measure of national or cosmopolitan importance! How, then, can an ordinary voter comprehend such a measure in all its associations and bearings upon the present or future interests of hundreds of millions of people belonging to different nations and civilisations in all parts of a world wide empire or a federation of peoples and states? It was not without reason that the greatest of British political thinkers—Edmund Burke, maintained that there is “as little of policy or utility, as there is of right, in laying down that a majority of men, told by the head are to be considered as the people and that as such, their will is to be law” Nearly fifty years ago, when the late Mr James Knowles started the “Nineteenth Century” Review, the late eminent British Statesman, W E Gladstone, laid down the proposition—and

it was discussed in a "Symposium" in the same Review by a number of writers and politicians of eminence—that "the popular judgment in politics is better than that of the higher orders." Against this view which smacks of demagoguish aspirations and arts, we would put forth the balanced and philosophic judgment of John Stuart Mill who, in one of his great writings, has boldly come forward to proclaim "the extreme unfitness of mankind in general, and of the labouring classes in particular, for any order of things that would make any considerable demand upon their intellect and virtue." It might be true that since the days of J. S. Mill, the labouring classes in England (and elsewhere) have made a great advance in "intellect and virtue" by availing themselves of the system of popular education in vogue which is said to be highly effective in promoting national efficiency in every direction. Still, the causes which have led to the world-strife recently ended and the events which have transpired in consequence of the holding of the various Conferences subsequent to the Armistice of 1918 do not enable us to entertain an assured hope that the ascendancy and prevalence of mere numerical majorities in determining National aspirations and policies

will ever be of benefit to national communities much less to mankind at large. It has even often occurred at British General Elections that the so called Majority is far from being a real Majority of the votes cast into the ballot-box,—much less of the entire electorate of Britain. Hence, the prevailing system of popular representation by counting the votes of the electorate is a mere delusion and a snare. Moreover, we have to remember how the ordinary voter is apt to be entirely misled and perverted in forming his political opinions or associations by the mischievous activity of professional politicians, and demagogues whose services are engaged by party 'Caucuses' cliques and committees formed in order to advance merely sectional or purely local interests. The wire puller is abroad and his work lies in identifying the party with the leaders or even its one bureaucratic leader for the time being and both with the national community at large in advancing its power prestige and pos- sessions in the world.

Finally, why do even constitutionally governed communities and even the democratic commonwealths of today retain the *right of veto* for their chiefs and presidents, and at least the theory (or pretence) of

the right for the institution of Kingship (such as we have it in the England of today) <sup>3</sup> Nothing can be better calculated to show how utterly mischievous is the right of mere "majorities" and numbers to lay down the politics and public measures of states at home or abroad. No doubt the veto is intended to be utilised as a last resort against the passions of the mob or the arts of the wirepuller and demagogue. Still it indicates clearly that there can be no greater political fallacy and no worse political falsehood than the doctrine which lays down that all citizens have equal natural rights in the state and which upholds the right of mere majorities and numbers to guide the policy of nations and the destinies of the human race at large.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### Popular Representation in Assemblies.

**I**N Ancient India, there were popular assemblies — for village administration: also, popular assemblies for the administration of groups of villages, ten, twenty, thirty, one hundred, and even one thousand in number. The authorities engaged in administering these villages and groups of villages were responsible to their several assemblies, and at the same time subject to vigilant supervision from those officers of the central (and supreme) government who controlled the villages and groups of villages. Each assembly and its officers, too,—it is superfluous to say—were subject to supervision and control from the assembly, and officers immediately above it. The central administration had its own (*i. e.*, the central or supreme) assembly and was responsible to it for the work done by its officials and authorities of all grades (*vide*. Mahabharata, Rajadharma Chap. 87). The existence of assemblies and



their control over officials is an undoubted fact, and one can only pity the ignorance or vanity which Indian modernism breeds in those of its votaries who, under Western influence, are led to suppose that ancient India was ruled by tyrants and therefore was an utter stranger to the conception of political freedom. It is also equally absurd to suppose that the ancient Indian state was like the mediæval state in Europe, an organised collection and association of the several classes conditions or orders of men forming our castes and sub castes, each recognised as having certain political powers. For all classes, conditions and castes in the Indian state had their own powers and opportunities of self expression in the several assemblies above mentioned—and thus there was self government in ancient India in its essence and fulness. If there was nothing like representation in the sense of casting votes in a ballot box, and finding the representatives of the people by a pure majority of votes it was because the Indian aim in all state organisation was not only to fulfil the present aims of the people, but to go beyond their present purview and to keep before their assembled representatives the true aim of the Indian state *viz*, the preser

vation of Dharma in its ideal completeness. The masses of the people were not permitted to settle their ultimate destiny,—that is, a mere chance or temporary majority of them was not given the credit of being able to direct the ultimate destinies of the state and even its immediate and passing aims or policies. For, ancient India differed from the modern state in a matter of the first importance. To the modern mind, there is no possibility of accomplishing or even planning an *ideally* best form of government—or even of discovering the supreme and final aim of all state organisation. We are often in these days told that every nation gets the form of government it deserves to have,—the best and the most suitable for its traditions and present stage of development and for its general situation of status as a whole, physical, racial, and educational. In India, on the other hand, Dharma settled the form and the aims of the state according to a permanent standard and fitted for all time to come. Hence, there were no revolutions in the Indian state from time to time, and it preserved certain permanent forms or institutions during all the time it lasted. If it was overthrown by accidental or destructive agencies at any time, it had still left a sufficient

amount surviving of the essentials needed to speedily restore its integrity and strength. It was only the introduction of aggressive European commercialism and *state-craft* in a hundred forms that, coming in before its promise of revival after the Moslem decline had been fully worked out, finally led to its disappearance. It was Western intrigue and cunning—not Western force, that settled its fate and fortune for ever without a chance of revival.

In Europe, people care neither for permanence nor even fairness and justice. All are agreed that representative government is a mere working device or mechanism for carrying on the State and enabling it to fulfil its aims from moment to moment in the perpetual struggle for existence among states and peoples. Revolutions are as natural and necessary for the latter as normal conditions of life—they are only intended to serve human societies in the same way as storms and shipwrecks in ocean-voyages. A Western writer says:—“*It remains for our political thinkers and statesmen in the legislature to evolve a scheme of representation which should be fair and just.*” It will remain, we fear till *Domesday* unevolved. No people, West or East,—we mean the masses at large—can ever be fitted to

evolve a true and lasting political ideal or the machinery of government, which is truly perfect. In India, Dharma settled both for us, and hence both had an *unexampled* vitality and duration. The masses of the people must certainly be helped to find out their true representatives for carrying on the government according to *their true interests and requirements*. But those who represent them in this sense cannot be selected by means of the system of casting votes in a ballot-box now prevailing in the West. We agree with Bluntschli when he says that "in most large towns and even in some parts of the country the rank weeds threaten to choke the nobler growths of the past" and that "the real interests of the proletariat proper demand patrons rather than representatives, which it cannot find in its own ranks" It is only because the representative system now prevailing is a thorough failure that in America "the business of government in the nation and the states is generally managed without skill and often without honesty;" that "many of our evils" come from the servility of politicians to that party of the public that is most insistent and most noisy; that "our politicians court the power that rules the country by bowing to its impulses, its idle fancies,

for mischief; and those who take their places are also elected on the same system and hence there is no possibility of an improvement except by altering the system itself. Nor is there a likelihood of improving the present state of things by simply educating the people—by giving them “free” and “compulsory” education—through the “Three R’s” or even by an educational system with still higher aims. For, the truth is that all men are unequal, *not* equal. Most men are only fit to receive guidance and influence from those who are more enlightened than themselves and therefore competent to form an opinion and give free expression of views regarding the measures needed for their benefit. However, it is right that the state should grant or guarantee equal opportunities and possibilities for all to help it in finding out the men whom public opinion truly points to as the best fitted for fulfilling the trust it places in them as the representative of the people. In all assemblies, also, the very best men available should have the predominant influence, and no one class or section of the people. The system of selection must be such that the best men of all classes must be brought together for deliberating on and deciding the steps to be taken in pursuit of the aims and

policy of the State. The late British Prime Minister W. E. Gladstone,—once declared that the principle of Liberalism was “trust in the people qualified by prudence.” Government is the highest and most difficult of all arts; and so only the most capable and high-minded men—those citizens alone in whom the *Sattvic* element in human nature predominates over the *Rajasic* or the *Tamasic* or both—must be chosen as members of the assemblies of all kinds in the state. This is equally true of the Council of Ministers and the officials who constitute the executive. It is only thus that we can prevent the men who now predominate in councils and assemblies of European or other states from usurping the powers which they now exercise to perform functions and achieve aims which can only bring disintegration disturbance, and discomfiture to the State or Empire in the future. Our Ministers and statesmen so-called often meddle with affairs of which they know nothing or little. They often reap the rewards they deserve and have often to seek refuge in silence or blatant and impudent self-assertion which can only ultimately land them in dismissal and disgrace or what is perhaps even worse. But for the moment they achieve a disagreeable notoriety and even

pose as heaven-sent messengers of a divine dispensation. India, however, has proved the ruin of many great reputations. India can never tolerate the utilisation or neglect of her true interest and destiny for the advantage or glory of those who do not comprehend either or possess any genuine sympathy for her in her present unhappiness and decline. If, as a living writer says, it is true in the West that "the state has been usurping functions which do not belong to it,—so much so that politicians now meddle with the whole social life, which is handicapped in spiritual affairs," this is still more true of India today, when she has no *truly* democratic system of government and her so-called representatives are *mostly* egotistic individuals or communalists whose sole aim is to harm individuals or groups to whom they bear a grudge and to advance the interests of other individuals or groups who have helped their own advancement. The system of popular representation that now obtains in India is doomed to an early extinction. It represents neither numbers, nor merit, nor the true aims of the Indian people, and already it is beginning to be found out. As J. S. Mill rightly pointed out:—  
"The opinion, the judgment of the higher moral

and intellectual being is worth more than that of the inferior ; if the institutions of the country virtually assert that they are of the same value, they assert that which is not." Such institutions of so-called democracy as are now at work in India can only lead to individual corruption and sectional advancement, and already they have begun to bear fruit in these directions.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### Indian Parties and Party Government.

**T**HERE are many who think that the *formation of parties and their occupation of the seat of power* are inseparable from the modern organisation of democracies,—that they are the means by which the forces of democracy endeavour to struggle against oligarchy in its various forms. There is much truth in this view. For, the several parties that form themselves in the democratic state try to maintain themselves in power only by appealing for support to the majority of the voters. Though it is true that this appeal to the masses results in the instability of the state policy and disturbance in men's political principles, the state gains in mobility what it loses in stability. Even stability is in a measure secured for the state by the maintenance of the government in popular favour though the *principles on which government is carried on* may undergo frequent change and this may cause inconveniences inseparable from

the constant and successive adoption of measures which are inconsistent and even contradictory in their aims by the different parties striving for mastery. Still, it is, in our view an error to suppose that because there are intellectual, moral, and spiritual differences between man and man, the formation of parties is indispensable for the well being of the people at large, or even that party feeling is a living and eternal phenomenon of human life, social or individual. We think that parties come into existence only when the measures of a state are based on the will and approval of majorities. Numbers, we have already seen are altogether a wrong basis for all kinds of collective action which aim at a higher standard of human well being than mere success and strength for the state. If so, the majorities whose views and feelings prevail in state life and the organised groups of politicians who appeal to them for support are equally undesirable, and it is best that their ascendancy should cease as early as possible in modern public life.

Moreover, it is easy to see that the formation of parties, factions and juntos is injurious to all democratic state life and the prevalence of the popular will in the carrying on of the state policy

For, every party, group, and faction tries to influence public opinion—i. e., the opinion of the majority—in favour of its own principles, measures, or supremacy in the state. How much truth, honour, or even safety often gets sacrificed in this conflict of opinion can never be fully realised! How are the people to be enabled to distinguish between an honourable striving for mastery by men who are guided by the honourable ambition of giving effect to their own honest principles and convictions and the mere unscrupulous endeavour to secure the spoils of office and the joys of supreme power? Moreover all parties and all movements for influencing public opinion claim to be influenced by the highest of all ethical standards in their public measures and conduct. Every party claims that it alone stands for "justice," while its adversary is aiming to attain to an inequitable and narrow monopoly of office or power against the true interests of the state and the people at large. In these days men never speak of personal rights, or class privileges, but only of public interests and the safety or advancement of the state and nation. At the same time, it is erroneous to suppose that all oligarchic feeling or prejudice has disappeared from modern society or state life. No

doubt, it must be admitted that power can no longer be centred in the hands of a hereditary class or clan of aristocratic families. We must not, however, suppose that the mentality known as aristocratic has ceased to have a place in modern social and public life. In the England of today, the working classes are dependent for their earnings and livelihood on the capitalist classes, and so a real democracy is a form of the state which can only *come into existence* when the principles of communistic socialism are adopted as the basis of modern society. So long as the economic conditions remain as they are today, the struggle of the masses against the ascendancy of plutocratic oligarchies will and must continue. There are those, also, who maintain that the will of the masses cannot be brought into play—or even into formation—without the influence and working of an oligarchic mentality entering into public life to enlighten, guide, and direct that will into the channels which are most suitable for the public happiness and safety. Parties are themselves the product of the need and the working of such oligarchic tendencies, and thus stultify the principle for which democracies have been brought into existence.

It is no doubt true that parties keep watch over each other and that the party which is in opposition always examines the measures of its rival or rivals when in power so as to improve it in the course of the discussions which take place in all modern deliberative assemblies. But parties are as often found to give a party colour to such discussions with a view to gaining an advantage for itself by making out that they alone advance the interests of the community as a whole. If parties were really formed to serve national interests, it would be impossible to conceive that Germany or the British Empire would have entered upon their recent ruinous conflict for supremacy in Europe. The very fact that British parties formed a Coalition during the war and maintains it still in order to face the problems arising out of it shows that the party system fails when great national issues arise. Moreover all observers have pointed out that, even in the British Parliament, the constituencies worry their representatives and clamour to secure various local advantages from the central government and that they do not judge of the conduct of these representatives by any large considerations of public interest or national glory.

We do not say that parties should not be formed or that their formation can be prevented under the political conditions now obtaining in the West or even in the East. What we want to say is that in the Ancient Indian polity, the principles and conditions—mentioned in the various previous sections—under which the popular representatives were chosen prevented all the evils of partisanship, while securing a just government for all in consonance with the Dharma. The representatives were chosen for their eminent social position and high personal character, and they were drawn from all orders of society in the state. They had no other aims or views in their public life than to shape the policy and measures of the king and his ministers in accordance with Dharma and, to secure thereby the progress and prosperity of the people. They brought a thoroughly open and independent mind to their task of criticising the measures placed before them, and hence the state always commanded the people's good will in the true sense of the term,—not upon what is called "popular will" in these times, viz., the tyranny of majorities. Throughout Europe and America, monarchies have been overthrown, or have been shorn of all their influence

and vitality. In the ancient Indian State alone the monarchy was a reality and no sham. It owed its strength and sufficiency for well-doing to its judicious combination with the aristocratic and democratic elements in the state and its determined resolve to give effect to the eternal principles of Dharma in carrying out the aims and measures of the state.

If we look at the current politics and the administration of affairs in South India, we think there is much to confirm what has been said above regarding the place of parties in modern politics. We have already had frequent occasion to point out that the Brahmins have never formed a faction, oligarchical or other, bent on securing place or power for themselves in the past history of India. This view has been confirmed by the observations and conclusions of many independent western writers and students who have carried on researches into Indian literature. When British rule was established and consolidated after Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858, the Brahmins, like a few of the *non-Brahmins*, availed themselves of the new system of secular education and entered the service of the state in large numbers. At the same time, they have, since A. O. Home founded the National

Congress, striven their best to secure the success of that great institution and its work of founding an Indian Nationality in modern India. Many non-Brahmins of South India, too, helped on the progress of the great movement, but the brunt of the work fell on the Brahmins. Just at the time when their labours and the labours of the individuals, of other classes who co-operated with them were about to be rewarded, the "*Justice party*" and the "*non-Brahmin movement*," so-called were formed to put an end to so-called Brahmin preponderance and influence in South India. The real object, as shown by subsequent events, was *chiefly* to secure the loaves and fishes of office. The Brahmins never clamoured for political influence or official monopoly, but only worked for the uplift and emancipation of the South Indian people at large. They never cared for politics in the sense of securing a large number of representatives and a correspondingly predominant influence in the Legislative Council. Even the present dominant policy of excluding them from subordinate offices of all grades and even from the advantages of education, general or vocational, they have accepted as inevitable under the abnormal conditions brought into existence by the so-called



"Justice" party. All that is wanted for this land is political freedom and the extinguishing of the monopoly of power by the bureaucracy. It is on these principles that the Brahmins have guided themselves in their public activities.

The Non-Brahmin *party*, on the other hand, has not only systematically attempted to secure a racial and communal preponderance—apart from all reference to merit or even seniority—in all departments of the State and in every grade of office in the Government service but it has helped largely to augment the authority and aggressiveness of the Civil Service Bureaucracy, as shown by the manner in which the recent administration of Malabar affairs has been conducted in various particulars. When parties are not formed on principles of national progress and when any one faction or junto gains the ascendancy in the state, it is no wonder that power is utilised to gain class ascendancy and monopolise the spoils of office for the members who have entered into a compact to exploit the public interests. We now hear the echoes of incipient discontent among some of the leaders of this party which often indulges in the boast of having elevated itself into the "new ruling class in South India." One of them has come

forward recently to declare openly that "the Non-Brahmins feel irresponsible by the field being free for them." The same person says of the Brahmins: "They feel that their occupation in the field of constructive public activity has gone. Political life to them is no longer worth living at least in the Madras Presidency; hence their dispersion to other parts of India and of the world." This is their reward for all their earnest and patient persistence in carrying on the Congress agitation of nearly forty years. The Brahmins, however, do not complain. Their work in this land has been always to live for Dharma—and this includes what has been called by no less a man than the eminent Christian teacher of South India, Dr. William Miller, "the solidarity of man" (*loka-sangraha* as the Gita calls it). It matters not if the Brahmins have no communal vote and representation,—in fact they have not asked for it, and do not want it. They have always taken their place among the ranks—*i. e.*, the common masses—of the people. Nothing can be more audacious as a historical falsehood or a political weapon than to say, as the non-Brahmin leader just quoted says, that the Brahmins have been—or are—"an oligarchy which stood in the way of the free growth

of the people." The account we have given in these columns of the political system of Ancient India shows that according to the *Dharma* of which the Brahmins were made the "custodians," the National Parliament and the Council of Ministers of State as well as the village and urban and provincial assemblies were composed of men of all castes, and the Brahmins formed in most or all cases only a small minority in them. We now see, on the other hand, that the ascendancy of the Non-Brahmin has, *within this short term of power of two years only*, avowedly accomplished "the dispersion of the Brahmins to other parts of India and the world." It has provoked the complaints of the Depressed Classes regarding "the aristocratic prejudices of the Non-Brahmins"—*i. e.*, of those Non-Brahmin classes which have monopolised the powers and offices of the State to the exclusion of others. The Non-Brahmins themselves—some at least—avow that there has been "a transformation of the Non-Brahmin movement which was started as a democratic movement in opposition to an "oligarchic movement." The so-called "oligarchy" here referred to is the Brahmin caste. We have said enough in various places already that the Brah-

mins have never held the position of an oligarchy in this country. Foreigners like M. Barth and others have also admitted the fact that the Brahmins throughout their history have *never* organised themselves to advance their interests as a class. The Non Brahmin party has already done much harm in South India. It can only maintain itself if, in the distribution of the spoils of office and the exercise of the powers of the State, it takes due account of what has been called "*the numerical relationships that obtain among the various classes of the population*". It is impossible to comprehend how this can be done in the distribution of offices in the State,—as different classes and sub classes comprised in the so called Non Brahmin community are differently circumstanced and endowed. The truth is that there is no really homogeneous community called the Non Brahmin in South India. Hence it is destined to become more of a class movement as time passes and as men are already beginning to see, and its professions of aiming at the good of all sections of non-Brahmins will and must fail and every one of the discontented sections and factions will unfailingly grumble at its own neglect or exclusion. The Non-Brahmin leader already quoted speaks of

the "*Justice-party*" as "a party without a brain," as a mere "counter-combination against the Brahmins":—"Among them (the Brahmins) there are trained public men whose co-operation, though not perhaps their leadership, is to be desired. This is made impossible in the nature of things by the Non-Brahmin movement." When all these facts are borne in mind, there can be no doubt as to where the new spirit of factionism in South India is bound to land South India. Here at least the Indian movement of political emancipation and responsible government is clearly a delusion and a snare.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### The State and Bureaucratic Rule.

**T**HE modern democratic State preserves itself against internal revolution by organising itself,—especially by employing a large body of officials of various grades of executive authority subordinate to the ministers who administer the various departments of public service. These officials earn their bread by carrying on the duties entrusted to them and form the pillars of its defence when the State is in danger or even when the ordinary law is defied by an individual or coterie from ignorance, perversity of human nature, and other similar causes. When these officials constitute a numerous body they become zealous champions of the State while at the same time they unite to advance their own interests by increasing the number of situations and offices in all branches of the State service so as to provide all with whom they are connected by ties of interests or of blood, or for as many of them as possible. When the state mechanism and organisation thus

attempts, by increasing the tasks and services it undertakes, to attach to itself a large number of individuals and families and extends its tentacles on all sides so as to suppress individual freedom of initiative and the formation of associations for advancing social or spiritual aims, then we have what is known as bureaucratic rule. Wherever bureaucratic rule comes into existence, we find that, while, on the one hand, the officials behave arrogantly towards the people at large, they pay court in the most servile and obsequious fashion towards their own superiors in office in order to secure promotion. They suppress all stirrings of the higher impulses and emotions in their nature in order to pursue their own official interests, and even become the sworn enemies of the people when the latter demand public rights and freedom of action in order to accomplish various economic or other aims and thus promote their collective prosperity and well-being. It is natural that, when such a state of things arises, the principles of "*direct action*" against the State which have come to be known as syndicalism should be propounded and gain a large number of adherents. The Syndicalists hold that, so long as the State is glorified as the one entity for which

all men must live and strive and which must be made omnipotent and irresistible in its attempts to sweep all citizens into its service, there can be no real progress or freedom for the people,—i. e., for the individual or the group. If every man is to have his own opportunities for doing congenial work for himself while joining constructive or creative work for humanity, if the ideal of universal brotherhood is to be carried out in the social and domestic sphere of existence open to each, if hatred and envy are to give place to love and service between man and man, every industrial and every social group must become a self governing unit promoting the interests of all its constituent members and fully in touch with their views and feelings regarding their relations to the State and its measures. In the present representative democracy of Europe, the so called elected members of the Parliament obtain their places in it by oratory and flattery and even bribery to the prejudice of the real interests and feelings of the people. The members of the popular assembly enjoy much prestige and dignity in the State but there is no vital integrity of association by mutual ties of interest between the electorate and the majority in Parliament which arrives at important decisions.



Parliamentary assemblies as they are now constituted, are swayed by party interest or by mere transient emotion and often do grievous injury to a people's sense of dignity and abiding convictions. Moreover, capitalists and plutocrats become allied or indebted to the bureaucracy of officials whose influence determines the trend of all economic measures adopted by the State and the administration of the law of the land—and especially of its criminal law—to put down their opponents and advance their own interests. Bureaucrats have always and everywhere possessed a family likeness—they have ever had an inexorable faith that they alone can devise and accomplish the measures needed for the well-being of the State and the people in all matters of domestic and foreign policy. What they have always hugged to their heart's embrace and put into practice with the most intense faith in their own interests is the system, which they have extolled as "*beneficent despotism*." To the people at large and to all who look at public affairs and their management from an impartial standpoint, this system does not seem, even at its best, to be *anything but despotism*, however much its measures or principles may be disguised under

cleverly-devised catchwords such as "*benevolent despotism*," &c. What really happens, however, is that it stifles all popular discretion and initiative even in matters which relate to economic prosperity and even domestic welfare. The watchword of the bureaucracy is "*efficiency*", and, in the pursuit of this all devouring and blood thirsty worship of a false and foul idol or Moloch, the bureaucrats kill all local government and self government in village, town, trade or industry and even provincial autonomy. The bureaucrat can never understand that there can be anything like parliamentary congestion of work leading to decay, losses, and miscarriage of justice. He wants only loyalty to his own system of administration. In his view it is his presence as an organised corporation that preserves the State from aggression from without or anarchy from within and therefore he resists all attempts to transfer any public business of any kind even in accordance with established principles of devolution. All voluntary organisation whether for educational or economic purposes, all trade unions all incorporated bodies of any kind, professional literary or even purely and entirely local in its purpose and purview, are objects of suspicion and dislike to the bureaucracy. In its

view, the public at large and all leaders of all sections of the community must always be prepared to perform any duties and satisfy any demands imposed by the State and must not agitate or clamour for any rights, even though their demand may only ultimately result in an innocent or useful devolution of the State's business by a constructive process valuable and educative in its bearings on public welfare.

In Ancient India, the bureaucratic state-official is either altogether conspicuous by his absence or altogether hidden from the public view. Even where he appears before the public, one of his functions is to explain the principles of State action and the measures taken in accordance with them to the public in accordance with the light of the Dharma or the reason acknowledged by all and intelligible to all sorts and conditions of men. In India, Artha (wealth) and Kama (matrimonial and family relations) are all ever kept subordinated to the ethical and spiritual considerations of the solidarity of man *i. e.*, to Dharma. Even national interests and racial progress were regarded as narrow and therefore unworthy of pursuit and even of avowal, when placed side by side with the eternal

and universal principles of the Dharma (or Divine word and revelation). In the West, revolutions, when successful, are not considered as undesirable, immoral, or discreditable as a last resort against the State when it cannot maintain itself against the assaults of its enemies within. In the Indian State, on the other hand, no party or section of the people can ever gain the ascendancy, for the State was guided in all its measures by assemblies of advisers—central, provincial, urban, rural, &c.,—of the highest moral worth and social status who commanded the confidence of the people. Moreover, the requirement that all state policies and measures must be in consonance with the requirements of Dharma and capable of being defended on the same basis was a check upon all purely autocratic, plutocratic or bureaucratic self-assertion, and domination. In all modern States,—even in such as are avowedly democratic,—the Government is able to maintain itself in power by securing at its back the strength, services, funds and organisation of a *party* of its own. When the party unity breaks down, the government has to seek its own dismissal from the head of the State. Moreover, even a transient unpopularity is often enough to cause its break-down and secure its dismissal.

The very bureaucracy which is its ordinary pillar of support will in such moments, and emergencies, retire from the eye of public recognition, leaving the government face to face with its enemies or rivals. It is a great disadvantage to a modern State that the Sovereign, Chancellor or Prime Minister who looms large at such crises before the people runs risks which are dreadful and often end in loss of life itself, not to mention other and lesser forms of distress or disaster. Such a state of things cannot at all exist in an Indian State organised according to principles of Dharma.

Moreover, the Indian state officials were drawn from all castes and classes which had a recognition and a place in the social corporation. The three higher classes had imposed on them the duty of providing for all the needs of the last and fourth class,—the masses of the population (the Sudras). They must see that they are never without food, clothing, and work. They must also arrange that the Sudras are always placed in a position to perform all sorts of *Manasa* (i. e., mental) Yajnas. Though the higher classes and castes were alone allowed to perform the ceremonial Yajnas, the sacred authorities of the Hindus insist that even for them the mentally-conceived and

mentally-performed rituals are superior to the ceremonial in their spiritual results to the individual. Hence, all men were placed in this respect on the same level of spiritual attainment, and this led to unity of aim, organisation, and interest in the society and the State. In the 14th Chap. of Raja-Dharma (Mahabharata), there is an enumeration of the Dharmas which have to be performed by "men of all classes" and even by "all Dasyus" (slokas 17-22). These Dharmas formed sources of unity and common interest among all citizens of the State. The State officials had themselves to promote unity of interest among the masses of the people and their association with the higher orders in the regular performance of all these Dharmas. Hence a bureaucratic system of rule which had interests or aims opposed to the universally-recognised Dharma (or the values universally accepted by all the masses of the people and those placed higher in the social scale) had no place or being in the ancient Indian State.

Finally so long as the idea of the omnipotence of the State is accepted in all forms of the modern State, we can never get rid of the bureaucratic system of government. How can the people be self-governed and free to agitate against and frustrate the working

of unacceptable or unjust laws and yet submit in practice to the ascendancy of the bureaucracy whom it maintains to enforce its own *existing* conceptions of right laws, and social order? In India, on the other hand, Dharma commanded universal allegiance from the sovereign to the lowest citizen, and even from the "Dasyus," as just stated. Hence, even the officials of the State formed no exception to the rule requiring universal acceptance of Dharma in principle and in practice. If their existence or organisation as a corporate body was in any particular antagonistic to the principles of Dharma, the king and those who advised him or exercised authority under him must endeavour to remove the evil. Dharma stood as a lode-star attracting all and influencing all; and its influence and sway never ceased. Under no system of democratic representation can we have a universal controlling, moralising, and spiritualising force like Dharma, and leading man nearer and nearer to his destined goal. Why should the civilised nations so-called use either violence or the insidious process of slow, but growing, disturbance towards old habits or institutions in order to finally remove them from the face of the earth? As Mr. F. S. Marwin, the editor of "The Unity Series" of books, avows:—"The

West has done ill in the past, not only by sheer brutality and devastations, but by the imposition of alien models and the suffocation of native industries and art." We must add that not only native industries and art, but even more the native ideals of state-action and state-existence have all been suffocated and destroyed! The *bureaucratic* system of rule is the agency which has been employed to stamp out all that is vital in the ancient institutions and traditional culture of the races whom Western aggression has brought under its sway. The "sun-dried bureaucrat's system of rule has neither vision to understand, nor the heart to protect, what is alien to it in intent or methods. It brings but rods of iron with it as its weapons of influence or attack,—and almost always successfully plays its predestined role as the exploiter and slave-driver whose energy and mobility and organising power is finally to pave the way for the monopolisation of all the power and resources of the entire area of the earth for the white race and for the complete control and subordination—if not occasionally also, the extermination in North America or Australia—of the other races of humanity.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### The Indian Kingship.

**WE** have seen how modern democracy is, in practice, almost always a mere delusion and a snare, —at best a mere profession or theory. Politicians in the West often play with it as men sometimes do with fire; and as the latter to their discomfiture and distress, raise now and then a conflagration, so always (or almost always) do rulers and public men find that they raise a revolution or come within sight of its threatening coruscations and reddening flames when they play with democratic abstractions or phantoms regardless of all natural dispositions and even the continuous traditions of the past in the communities or nations among whom they pursue the aims and fortunes of their public career. In the Ancient Indian State, the Dharma, while it avoided all parties, party-politicians, political bosses, bullies and busybodies of all kinds, also aimed at bringing into beneficent and active working a monarchy whose

sole prerogative lay in obeying all the calls and mandates of Dharma and whom no demagogue, wirepuller, or caucus can deprive of his place and function as the protector of all classes and groups and guilds among his people and the guardian of their interests. The Indian monarch was never an autocrat, and could not be. For, he, like all other individuals, corporations, interests and "*estates*" in the State had his place on account of the function (*Dharma*) entrusted to him which he discharged to the entire satisfaction of his people and his chosen advisers and officers of all kinds. Modern democracy is powerful for the conversion or degradation of even the most disinterested men in public life into mere politicians, for otherwise they can never become leaders, ministers, or heads of departments charged with the determination and definition of the principles or measures of the State's policy, domestic or foreign. In ancient India, on the other hand, the King's Dharma placed him above all class-jealousies, if indeed any such could exist in a society and State where all were animated by faith and trust in the divine mandates of Dharma. The Crown stood for not even the conception of a nationality or national interest, much less for the prejudices, wranglings, and ambitions of the

people as a whole or any section of it in especial. His abounding faith in God and in God's commands (or rules of Dharma) made him the guardian of the interests and happiness of his people. Dharma was the one eternal link binding the past and present—and even the future—into an honourable and all-comprehending national, popular—or better still, *racial*—tradition, and it prevented all radical or fanatical changes and revolutionary aspirations and even revolutionary outbursts among the people. In India, the monarchy was the people's idol and it was even a symbol or incarnation of the personality of God himself in his function as the preserver and ruler of the universe. No King could in India be arbitrary, autocratic, absolute, or despotic in any particular measure or general policy of the State. He even rose above all shibboleths and symbols of attractive, visionary and doctrinaire theories and fads. No such cries or watchwords as Freedom, Equality, Fraternity were ever emblazoned upon the banners either of the Indian State or of any section or faction in it. The ancient Indian King brought his personal influence and power of initiative to bear upon all State matters, and thus he gained a place of honour in the political imagination of his people. He moved freely

among his people, and was daily seen by them in his *tours* through the country, in his *devotional visits* to his people's temples, and during his resplendent and over-ruling guardianship over all State ceremonies and sacrifices. He often visited the houses of his people during their domestic festivities and thereby raised them in their own self-estimation and in the estimation of their fellow-citizens. It was really thus that he became the fountain of honour and not in the sense of conferring title-deeds of nobility and decorations on persons with an unenviable or doubtful record against their names. The Indian people never wanted their monarch to attract their admiration, devotion or even their loyalty by merely calling to his councils of ministers or assemblies men who put forward before him ideals, measures or expedients, novel and bold, but of doubtful efficacy in promoting the happiness or welfare of his people. The Indian people's love of sentiment, romance, or adventure was never such as to lead to dramatic or catastrophic situations where the resources of genius or the mere brute force of organisation can alone enable the chiefs of their State or its machinery to avert danger to the exclusion of all well-tried standards of political mora-

lity and the public spirit of leaders grown grey in the service of God and man.

Much is made, in the working of the Western monarchical states like Great Britain, &c., which are also democratic, of the personal character of the sovereign and his knowledge gained through his status of permanance amid a changing succession of ministries placed in power by the votes of the majority of voters at a General Election. Much is also made of his power to choose the head of each ministry and his colleagues, of his power to sanction a dissolution and of his daily consultation and correspondence with his ministers for purposes of advice, remonstrance or influence and even through his merely asking for information regarding the events that are daily taking place or the policy, measures, or general attitude of his ministers towards them. But all this implies more of the form, than of the essence and the reality, of Kingship. The fact actually is that the party chief —i. e., the Prime Minister—and the party counsellors whose co-operation is essential to him for carrying on the administration have the entire policy of the State in their hands and determine its position of power and prestige among the world's states. The Sovereign, whatever his elevation and dignity, can exercise no

control and no check upon the minister's public aims or measures before they give them the shape or direction which commands itself to their wisdom and patriotism. The King can do no wrong, but he cannot do also what is right according to his discretion. He is usually as near an approach to an ornamental appendage of the State as it is possible to conceive in the circumstances in which he has to play his part in the actual working of the constitution its laws and conventions.

The monarch in the ancient Indian State chose the members of his assembly, but only from among those to whom public opinion in various meetings pointed as the wisest and most estimable among subjects. The King chose similarly the best and most popular leaders of the people as his ministers after watching the trend of the prevailing opinion in the assemblies of the State or popular meetings held in various districts and centres of population within his dominions. The choice was entirely his own, no one could be forced on him or force himself on him because he alone commanded the confidence and support of the masses of the population. The Indian King was a true father and protector of his people, and his discriminating enforcement and observance of

Dharma was the sole source of his popularity and power in the State.

Moreover, it must be remembered that, so long as his supremacy and influence in the State was accepted loyally by his people and regarded as the fountain-head from which flowed the perennial stream of public happiness, health and welfare, the king let them engage freely in all sorts of creative, economic, ethical, artistic, educational experiments or constructions. "*Whatever the Sovereign permits he commands.*" The success of the operations of the State through its various departments or officials and authorities is greatest where only rapid standardisation is possible through the perfection of routine and the exercise of watchfulness in a pre-eminent degree. Even private concentration of effort through monopoly is often apt to fail in various matters when the aim is mere private or sectional advantage and not the public benefit or the promotion of those values which lead to the acceptance and realisation in life of the ideals of truth and righteousness. So long as the activities of the people associated or individual, are constructive and serviceable in the promotion of social or spiritual advancement of any kind, the State will be well-advised in regard to all advances thereby

made in the same light in which it would regard progress gained through its voluntary acceptance of devolution as a means of encompassing the aims of the State itself. Non co-operation so called has a constructive phase which, when it results in measures calculated to promote public welfare through educational efforts and experiments or acceptable forms of combination among individuals so as even to dispense with some of the machinery of the State now existing is not necessarily an evil and ought not to be regarded as even remotely smacking of sedition and disaffection. The springing into existence of public bodies intent on the promotion of communal or patriotic aims without bringing the State into conflict with such bodies will always be regarded with dislike by all bureaucracies and autocracies, but it promotes national strength and prosperity. Even a State founded on socialistic (or communistic) principles and bases will be apt to regard such bodies and their triumphs in art or industry with suspicion. It is not alone bureaucracies and autocracies which are built on foundations which are sometimes irrational, and narrow.

The Indian Kingship and State recognised in all its fulness the value of the practice of local govern-



ment in the village, and above the separate villages, in groups of 10, 30, 50, or 100 villages. Each village and each group of villages had its own local mechanism of orderly administration,—its own headman, its own public assembly, its own industries and guilds, and its agricultural interest. The central government interfered very little with the working of the local government or its relations with the local institutions. It maintained the unity of the Indian State and its relations with foreign States, and it made itself responsible for the peace of the entire land. It took taxes from the local areas marked out as centres of rural organisation, and those taxes were almost entirely spent in the service of the inhabitants of the State and for the promotion of their interests at home and abroad. It was entitled, whenever the need arose, to modify or control the action of subordinate authorities, but Dharma was the standard and basis of all such intervention and prevented its development into bureaucratic or autocratic tyranny. For these reasons, the village autonomy was a real blessing to the people of India. India did not lack towns or suburban areas with their own self-governing institutions. But they did not develop in such a manner as to depopulate or

disintegrate Indian villages. India remained throughout her ancient and mediaeval history a continent of villages. Even her urban and suburban culture partook largely of the distinctive features of the simplicity of a rural economy. Hence the rural population was never attracted towards the ancient towns, but found both employment and comfort where they were. The greatest evil of modern life and culture is the abnormal growth of towns and cities and all those evils of over-population which have converted them into veritable plague-spots,—not only the hot-beds of disease, but of moral contamination, spreading therefrom all over the world and brutalising the entire human race with all its disastrous consequences as exemplified in the recent barbarous World-war and its after-math of undying hatred and distrust among those who partook in it.

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## CHAPTER XX.

### The State and Its Problems of Race and Colour.

THE State in ancient India had none of the afflictions and distractions which are a disgrace to the civilisation and constitutions of the "political" West. All subjects were entitled to the rights of citizenship and the protection of the State. The citizen, as such, had no disabilities, and was assured of perfect freedom to live where he liked and do what he wished, subject only to the mandates of the divine being as embodied in Dharma. These mandates too only governed the social and political relations of the *Holy People* comprised in the Four Varnas as brought into existence at the time of creation and interested in maintaining their distinctiveness,—the "unity without uniformity" by their constancy and devotion to the injunctions of Dharma. The care and vigilance of the authorities in maintaining the functions appropriate to the Four Varnas and the harmony which their observance and preservation promoted among the various classes

of society without destroying any available and well-established sources or opportunities of national and ordered progress resulted at no time or place, in interfering with the legitimate freedom of the rest of the inhabitants of the State to pursue their avocations and live their chosen life in any part of the Indian King's territory and empire. The Indian Dharma recognised, in the truest sense, the "rights of man" as man to live in a world not made by any tribe, nationality, society, concourse, or section among the human race, or even by any number of them in combination. It also recognised the right of all men to live up to their own ideas and convictions in regard to religion and conduct, so long as they obeyed the minimum of legal and civic obligation enforced on all citizens to protect the elementary rights of person and property to which every one is entitled by reason of his status as a free member of the civic community for whom the State exists.

It is the civilisation so called of Modern Europe that has brought upon the world all the troubles arising from the hatreds of race and colour now indulged by the so called white races of that Continent. India has never refused ingress, or residence, or civic rights to any human being, and

yet we are asked to believe that our institution of caste is one based on the hatred of man for man, and destructive of the feeling of human brotherhood. The *Christian* and *White* peoples of Europe deny the elementary rights above-mentioned to all other human beings simply on the ground that the climates which the latter have had as their habitat have transformed the colour of their skin and produced all the existing shades and varieties of *all the colours, including white*. Yet they claim that they alone practise universal brotherhood, according to the teachings of Jesus. The founder of Christianity himself was born among the Jewish race, and yet no race of men have been so much persecuted by the Christian and White people of the European Continent. All the enlightenment of modern times—*enlightenment* which is noisily proclaimed from the house-tops by every inhabitant of European countries and easily conceded and extolled by unthinking imitators in other countries and continents—has not been able to bring about any substantial change in the attitude of Christian Communities towards them. Mr. Hilaire Belloc's recent work on the Jews who now reside in England has received an approval and eulogy which is significant

of the underlying human sentiment of dislike for them even now fully at work in the minds of the people of Great Britain. Nor is there any reason to hold that there is a change for the better in the relations existing between the Jews and the inhabitants of other countries. Nor is it true that the peoples inhabiting the various countries of Europe feel towards each other the kinship and unity which those who practise the same ideals of culture may be expected to recognise. For example, we saw only recently that, as soon as the recent Great War broke out, the German people were denounced as "Huns" in spite of the fact that the British freely intermarried with them, and we believe the same to be the case with the French, the Italians, Russians and others. Such are the unreasoning oddities, impulses, and barbarities resulting from the race and colour bars sedulously maintained and cultivated by the white inhabitants, so called, of the European Continent.

Professor Bertrand Russell truly says that 'tribal feeling which always underlay loyalty to the sovereign, has remained as strong as it ever was, and is now the chief support for the power of the State.' The old "tribal feeling" has now become

developed into "*the sentiment of Nationality*," and is now the *main* source of the unity and strength of all big national States and their vast empires. Every big State to-day which is also a big empire has its own system of political education in order to magnify its own history and achievements and also to belittle the history and achievements of other races and peoples. In this manner, every "civilised" people in Europe is made to believe that every other is inferior to itself and that it must extend its power and prestige over the rest of the world. It is in this manner that each and every one of them has come into the possession of a vast empire over colonies and dependencies. The progress of science has greatly helped this process of empire-building. Mr. Marvin points out in his recent volume on "*the Western Races and the World*" that, in the course of this progress of Scientific knowledge, "the leading spirits of the West conceived the great idea of all Mankind advancing, as one army, though at various rates, towards an end of growing perfection; and of this advance, the West, through its geographical position and its historic advantages, becomes for the time the natural leader." (p. 22). According to him, each western race has for its "problem" the

effort "to bring up the whole body of their fellow-men to the level reached by the most advanced"—and the *method* for achieving this aim is "the parallel development of educational effort at home and civilising work abroad." We have seen already what the nature of "the educational effort at home" is at present and its effects on the character and aims of every Western people and Nationality. As to the "civilising work abroad," Mr Marwin himself speaks as follows—"At each stage the conception of the duty widens and the machinery to effect it is made more complete, though it would be easy to point out also in the same period a series of lapses especially in the action of the West on backward races. There have been, even near to our own days hideous crimes committed, but they are now recognised as crimes, and as such investigated and—though often too mildly—punished." Even in India, today, we have become sufficiently familiar with the methods adopted for "*recognising, investigating and punishing* these hideous crimes." Apart from this ugly feature in the dealings of the West with the "backward races" under its control Mr Marwin takes us into his confidence with regard to some other methods comprised in what he calls



"the civilising work abroad." He says:—"trade is an education, and the settlement of wandering tribes in more fixed habitations. The tax-collector, the judge, the engineer are all schoolmasters as truly and often more effectively than the Missioner and those who hold the title by right." But what is the general trend of the efforts made by Western traders, tax-collectors, engineers, judges, and even the "Missioners" and schoolmasters who claim the title of educators and civilisers?

On this point, the views even of British *observers of the phenomena of Indian life, political and economic*, present a diversity, or conflict which is very significant, indeed. Why, then, should it surprise any one if a historian like Mr. H. O. Hodges, in the course of a work called "A Survey of Modern History," writes as follows in his Chapter on "India":—"Within the last generation there has grown up an increasing agitation for Home Rule, voiced and led by that small fraction of the Indian people which has received a higher education. Among this small minority the feeling has steadily strengthened that the Government of India has been guilty of false pretences; that while it has bestowed on India the blessing of peace, justice, and

material prosperity, it has cynically and deliberately barred the avenues by which Native Indians may come to share in their own executive government. The British are charged with inconsistency ; they have, it is said, vaguely permitted the way towards Western political and social ideals, but have refused to lead or to smooth the path towards the final goal, which is self-government. *There is some justice in this complaint.*" *The italics are ours.* Mr. Hodges himself admits that "the British rule has as yet procured for Indians either no education or a defective education." If it has shirked even so elementary a duty, why should it not transfer the charge of government to the educated class—the class which it has itself educated and raised—to shoulder the burden of the attempt to raise the level of Indian culture and the newly-needed institutions of self-government? There are some men—many more than we know—who seem to think that the bestowal of self-government on a wide scale at present would mean the revival of the anarchy of the pre-British epoch in India. To all such, we have to present the statement of Mr. Charles Roberts who writes the chapter on the "Indian problem" in Mr. Marvin's book

already mentioned. He says truly:—"I am sure that the history, as we read it, exaggerates in our minds the anarchy and misrule from which British administration rescued India." When the Moslem rule in India failed, the Hindus had already entered upon a career of reconquest and rebuilding their own States and political institutions. Moreover, several of the mediaeval Hindus and Moslem States have continued to live on even unto the present day. Mr. Roberts also points out the fact, "how comparatively little the Empire in India came to us (the British) through the exercise of merely military subjugation." Further, Mr. Roberts says:—"Large parts of India were certainly never conquered...But even the armies which did effect the conquest were largely composed of Indians, and when the Mutiny came in 1857 there were more Indian troops raised by us to help our white troops than were fighting against us. There is a moment in very recent history which illustrates the extent to which administration in India rests on something other than force. For a period at the outbreak of the Great War, Lord Hardinge had the courage to hold India, with its 1,800,000 square miles of territory and over 300 millions of people with no more

than 15,000 white troops, and that daring step was not taken rashly, but after careful sounding of opinion and assurances that real danger was not involved. Does not this conclusively prove that India is held in the Empire by some ties other than those of force?"

What are those ties? They are all based on the hope and conviction that, in the words of an English writer, "*her (England's) empire rests on freedom, generosity, loyalty and comradeship, and not on force*." In the councils of the League of Nations India has been granted a position and rights equal to those of other parts of the British Commonwealth. How, then, can it be just or wise to refuse to it the same honourable status of equality as a self-governing unit as exists among the various other States comprised in the British Empire? Mr Marvin says—"India has gained, and suffered, from her internal divisions and her subjection to foreign conquerors." But all such divisions and sufferings belong to the past. The Hindu Moslem Entente of today builds its hopes of the future on the founding of self government. Self government is to be the cement not only of the Indian unity now achieved, but to be the basis and bed rock of the close political alliance between India and Great Britain.

which in the future as in the past, is to raise the British Empire to a height of glory and influence on human destiny of which we can now form no adequate idea and conception. To transform the existing alliance so as to attain the developments which are needed for the gaining of this supreme destiny is the aim of the Indian Nationalism of to day. If the truth were realised, as it should be, it would be found that Indian Nationalism is not based on *patriotic*, but on *truly Imperial, aims*,—not on love of power and threat of force, not on resentment and love of aggression, but on love of freedom among "*citizens of India*" aspiring after the attainment of the full status of *citizens of the British Empire*. We cannot listen to the twaddle that every other part of the Empire is to be exclusively reserved for the white races or that their white inhabitants alone can enjoy perfect freedom to settle and thrive in India, on the ground that they alone are entitled to the full rights of Imperial citizenship. Nor can we lend ear to the other equally absurd, unfounded and irrational chatter that the white races of the British Empire have alone the advanced culture and qualifications needed at present to guard and develop the British Empire against its foes of today.

The idea of creating a "pale" for a chosen few has failed in the past,— it failed in the North American Colonies, in Canada, and in Ireland. It is that idea that is mainly or solely responsible for Mr. Marvin's unquestionable statement that "the West has done ill in the past, not only by sheer brutality and devastations, but by the imposition of alien models and the suffocation of native industries and art." So long as ideas of race and colour hold sway over the minds of a ruling and superior class of "white" British citizens, so long as self-government is not fully conceded, at least to India, there is every chance of the decline and downfall of what Mr. Marvin calls "*the rich historical civilisation of India, preserving much of its ancient order, but absorbing by a thousand channels more of the spirit of the West.*" It is because we want to preserve, develop, strengthen, and perfect this "rich historical civilisation" of ours that we agitate for self-government and agitate, too, by purely constitutional and "non-violent" methods of re-construction. We do not want to follow the example of "the Japanese, now fit to be called the Westerns of the East" (*vide* Marvin's work, already cited, *Introduction*, p.-17). Let us not forget the memorable words

which fell from Swami Vivekananda's inspired lips and voice—" *India will never be Europe until she dies.*" We are "absorbing by a thousand channels more of the spirit of the West," but we must resist the "Westernisation" of India, even in the field of politics and by all means preserve our "rich historical civilisation" of immemorial antiquity.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### War and the Ideal of Ahimsa.

MANY new counsellors have arisen of late in this country whose counsel for Indians, for the present crises and for all time, is to observe what they proclaim as *absolutely* valuable and effective for eradicating evil,—the Gospel of *Ahimsa* (or non-violence). Among these is a person who has recently risen to some importance as a follower (or confidante) of the far-famed living Bengalee poet, Tagore. In a recent work of his—"Terence MacSwiney and the New World-Movement"—he writes:—"There was the memory of Gautama, the Buddha, as he held fast to the truth which he had won, through sufferings greater than death. There was the memory of the Christ upon the Cross. The Message is one. Indeed, it is the soul of all true religion among men. Evil cannot be overcome by evil, but only by good." (p. 53). This last sentence is Mr. Andrew's version of the Buddha's saying "Hatred cannot be overcome by hatred, but hatred can be overcome by love." Mr. Andrews finds a saying of Jesus to match this



one of the Buddha's:—"They that take the sword shall perish with the sword." In our view, this saying has a wholly different import,—*viz.*, to warn the followers of Jesus against *aggression for its own sake and without any considerations of worth, cause, or consequence*. However, there can be no doubt that Jesus spoke as a *lofty idealist* when he taught his followers:—"love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and do good to them that hate you": also "resist not evil," &c. The same "*lofty idealism*" is also contained in the *Mahabharata* precept, "*Ahimsa paramo dharmah*," i. e., "*non-violence is the highest virtue*." Bhishma, however, must not be understood as a supporter of the modern advocate of absolute non-violence,—for he was the lion-hearted leader and commander of a mighty army. Nor do we think that even Jesus proclaimed it as the highest—much less as the one absolute—precept of morality, irrespective of all considerations of time, place, and circumstance. For in the history of nations, even after the utmost limits of enlightened and humanitarian forbearance and renunciation of rights have been passed in the honest and manly effort to preserve peace, crises of force have arisen and have had to be met, not by frothy sentiment or

logic chopping, but by masterful resource and the unflinching resort to the arbitrament of war. This is the lesson conveyed to Indians by both their sacred epics,—the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Neither Sri Rama nor Sri Krishna was unaware of the *ideal* principle of Ahimsa,—the ideal to be practised by the highest and most perfect man,—the man who has attained, in due course of development, to the summit of human excellence in renunciation,—the man to whom the ordinary life of man in society and the State offers no attractions, and who seeks the realisation of the Atman or has attained to it. A Rishi like Yajnavalkya or Suka or a perfected Sanyasin like Sadasiva Brahmendra, or even one who aspires after an achievement, of the highest spiritual state identical with theirs is the man who feels called upon to practise the ideal of Ahimsa. But in all these cases the claims of society and the State have ceased to exist, and their conscientious convictions or superhuman spiritual and ethical accomplishments and attainments command implicit admiration and acceptance in all quarters. Barring all these exceptions, the resort to the arbitrament of force as a necessary precept of Dharma fit and even necessary for observance is inculcated both by the

Ramayana and Mahabharata. At the same time the resort to war as the final arbiter of a crisis in the life of States and societies must be made to proceed from such a supreme or ultimate centre of force as can be relied on to make use of its strong arm of power—tempered, too, by mercy, as it ought to be—to put down the ebullitions of unthinking brutality and fanaticism in the “*tamasic*” human nature. Schopenhauer states the bare truth when he says of the ordinary *tamasic* man:—“It is physical power alone which has any direct action upon men; constituted as they are *generally*, it is for physical power alone that they have any feeling or respect.” And again:—“Almost every human breast is the seat of an egoism which has no limits, and is usually associated with an accumulated store of hatred and malice so that at the very start feelings of enmity largely prevail over those of friendship.” Hence, we must recognise the bare truth that it is due to the existence and working of physical force as a part and parcel of the machinery of the State that law, order, and peace ordinarily prevails in the relations of men, national and international, within and without a State. At the same time, we must recognise that the eternal moral law demands that the physical force machinery

must be set in motion only in exceptional cases and contingencies, and that even then man in his relations with his fellow-man must suffer his spirit to continue to be sustained by the life-giving milk of love and mercy, so that the agencies employed in the operation of force may at any moment be restrained by the fiat of authority, the horrors and hazards of war may cease with almost lightning rapidity, and the law of love may be restored to its normal course of beneficent activity in guiding all human relations in the society and the State.

It has been said of Sri Ramachandra, the mightiest warrior of all time and "the highest of all who wielded the sword," that "*only in due place and time his anger blazed and his arm struck.*" (*Sundarakanda*, Sarga 43). Hanuman assures Sita that "the great hero and warrior will, within a short time, kill Ravana in battle with his arrows cast with all the vehemence of his wrath and blazing like radiant flames." (*Ib*). Sri Ramachandra was ready at all times and even to the very last to pardon Ravana if he repented and restored Sitadevi. When the nobles and sages and leading men in the land declared their desire that Sri Rama should be made the *Yuvaraja* and placed in charge of the adminis-

tration of affairs, they are said to have told King Dasaratha about their idolised future ruler and the elect of their hearts:—"His wrath and his grace are never without (proper) purpose; he chastises only after exercising much (thoughtful) restraint, and only those who deserve it; and he never displays his anger towards those who do not deserve to be dealt with severely." Such was Rama, the ideal King and warrior in the *progressive epoch* of Ancient India, when Hindu civilisation was resistless in its march of triumph over its Rakshasa hordes of enemies.

Let us look again at Hindu ideals and activities when our culture had reached a critical stage in an age of comparative decline,—the age of the Mahabharata—when unity no longer existed and was replaced by a blood-thirsty and fratricidal struggle between rival kinsmen, clans, communities, and nations. First, Sanjaya goes to Upaplavya, the residence of Yudhishtira, at the instance of Dhritarashtra, to ascertain the aims and purposes of the Pandavas. The latter desire peace and declare themselves ready to content themselves with the cession of their "own due share" of the kingdom (and empire)—what they describe as

“*uchitam svakam bhagam.*” They go on to state that they would even be pleased with some part of the same (“*rajyaikadesa*”) and, as a last resort, even with five villages (*pancha-gramam*). Then Vidura warns Dhritarashtra that, if the Pandavas are not given their due share of the kingdom, his son (Duryodhana) would certainly lose all, and that nothing would remain for him to rule over. Sanjaya also assured him that Sri Krishna was the lord of the universe, that he only made the restoration of the Pandavas the occasion and the excuse for entering upon and fulfilling his own mission of destroying his sons (and others) who were intent on the commission of sin (*Adharma*). Sri Krishna himself tells the Pandavas that they must not indulge the thought of making a begging petition to Duryodhana to cede them something, but that they must as Kshatriyas, take up their Svadharma of fighting, relying on the Supreme Being for the reward they deserved,—viz, ‘victory or death in battle’ (*jayo vadho va sangrame*). When Sri Krishna was engaged in his mission of negotiation for peace, he makes a statement that whoever hated the Pandavas and (especially) Arjuna, was his own enemy, for they (the Pandavas) were ever bent on the practice of righteousness

(Dharma.) In fulfilling the mission entrusted to him, he pointed out the serious consequences of engaging in war and the benefits of averting it by conceding to the Pandavas what was their due. At the same time he pointed out all the evil done to them by 'Duryodhana. Unable to endure Krishna's charges against him or his express declaration of his devoted friendship for the Pandavas, Duryodhana rejected Sri Krishna's message and pleadings. Krishna before returning visited Kunti (the mother of the Pandavas) and took her message with him that her sons should fight and should never think of any negotiation for concessions.

Thus we see that Hindu ideals of war were the same throughout the ages, and that the "ideal" of Ahimsa was no part of the Dharma of our common social life in *normal times* and even under the normal life-conditions under which individuals pursue their aims and avocations. At the same time, the Hindus have no such Satanic ideas as to war and its uses as are enunciated in the late German General Von Moltke's dictum that "war is a holy and divine institution, it is one of the sacred laws of the world; it keeps alive in men such great and noble sentiments as virtue and courage, and in a word prevents them

from falling into the most deadly materialism'. Indeed, we are easily convinced of the truth of Mr Gladstone's interpretation of the lesson of all history contained in his declaration that "War benefits no body. In all cases one country is in the wrong and very often both countries are in the wrong." In India such ethical considerations were left to be determined by the authorities and assemblies who were entrusted with responsibility for the administration of state affairs and the promotion of the people's well-being. When once war is settled as the policy of the State in its pursuit of Dharma, the Kshatrya is called upon to fight regardless of all consideration whether the result would be "victory or death,"—for that result is determined by the will of the Supreme whose inscrutable wisdom judges all and rewards all according to their deserts.

The "*Modern theory of Non violence* and the Hindu '*ideal of Ahimsa*' are as the poles, apart. The latter is reserved for the highly developed spiritual man who has risen above the ordinary levels of human desire or ambition into the lofty empyrean of absolute purity of mind and passionless peace. Mr Welfred Wellock's '*Ahimsa and the World Peace*' is another publication now current



in our land and published to further the same cause as the one we are now examining in order to ascertain what is the truth about the Hindu ideals of War and Ahimsa. Mr. Wellock says that "man must needs love the highest when he sees it";—that "life has but one law,"—viz., the law of love and self-sacrifice. The ideal of conduct is *Vairagya*, the giving up of what satisfies mere sensual craving and the pursuit of what elevates the soul of man to the realisation of the Innermost Bliss of Love. Sri Sankaracharya asks,—and the question answers itself the moment it is put,—"For whom can the giving up of sense-cravings fail to bring joy?"

And yet how few lend their ears to the sweet and serene enchantments of the divine voice which proclaims Love, Ahimsa, Renunciation of carnal joys and desires, as the one aim, and goal of life. Jesus, the "Son of God," has proclaimed in dulcet tones, "Resist not evil." Tolstoy, as his true interpreter, has said,—“Whenever a man is conscious of moral elevation, he inevitably finds associated with a consciousness of love, love to god, love to his neighbour, love to all men without exception.” Bhishma, with the Divine Being himself in front of him in the glorious and enrapturing form of Sri

Krishna, proclaims the lofty ideal embodied in his deathless maxim, "*Ahimsa paramo dharmah*." Our own matchless Mahatma Gandhi has propounded for us his Gospel of *Satyagraha*. But, men are not all alike,—and it is not true that, as Mr. Wellock says, all men "must needs love the highest when they see it." The "ideal" of Hinduism is love and renunciation,—what is known as *Nirriti Marga*. But only the *higher man of unique spirituality* can rise to its level and attainment. For the ordinary man of the world, there is only open the path of *Pravritti*, the Dharma (or Swadharma) prescribed for each in the environment in which the Divine Being has placed him in accordance with his own evolution (by *karma*) as indicated by his "Guna" in his present body and incarnation. The Kshatrya is *ordinarily bound* to fight, when the opportunity offers, in a righteous war on behalf of his own King and State. As Sri Krishna teaches in his Gita,—"*Nothing can be of greater profit to a Kshatrya than to fight in a righteous cause*."

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## CHAPTER XXII.

### War in India and in the West.

**S**OME people hold that there is something particularly wicked and brutal in man which rises to the surface when he resolves to resort to the arbitrament of the sword in order to gain his aims. For example, Mr. Wilfred Wellock says :—"By participating in war, civilised man debases himself, affirms what is not true, viz., that intellectual, moral and material forces are not stronger than physical and material forces." In India, on the other hand, while we do not deny that war is a "rugged road" to take for the gaining of human aims, we do not think that it should be regarded as evil under all circumstances. When all other means of right action have failed, it becomes itself a righteous method of action,—for it then becomes a final resort, of men left in a state of utter despair and forced to take action under a clear sense of wrong and injustice done to them. It is then that Hindu sacred authorities describe war itself as a *Yagna* (a mode of "sacrifice") offered to the gods. *Manu* says that

a chief must try to gain his ends by negotiation (*śama*), by giving up some lesser for a higher gain (*dana*), by effort to bring disunion in the enemy's ranks (*bheda*)—by any one of these means, or a combination of them, that war must, by all possible means, be averted, as nothing can be more uncertain than victory or defeat in war, and that only when all the other methods of endeavour have been attempted and proved futile, war must be resorted to as a final resource, and even then only if there is a certainty of victory according to all human standards of calculation (VII, 198—200) If a Chief gains the victory in war, he must regard it as a gift and favour from the gods and proceed to the granting of all sorts of boons, concessions and privileges to his people for theirs is the real sacrifice and they have given away valuable human lives in abundance in order to secure victory to their Chief. The gods too must be propitiated by offerings of various kinds. It is thus that in India those who resort to war have to feel—and are called upon to feel—that even in war it is not mere brute force, but right or reason (impenetrable by human understanding and intelligible only to the supernatural intelligence of the gods and rishis who form a

hierarchy of beings interested in the affairs of men), has asserted itself in producing the ultimate result. Mr. Wellock says that "moral right is a higher right than of physical force." This is, indeed true—but not in the sense he assigns to the saying, viz., that the morally right cause *must* win in the world even without the use of physical force, and that therefore force in the shape of war must cease. All this is well enough as a pure theory or speculation attractive to a certain class of faddists or fanatics. But the Hindu Dharma is no theory or fad or mere bunkum,—but the revelation to man of the spiritually illumined intelligence of the Rishis. We follow them not from patriotic motives, but because we know that their injunctions of Dharma are the mandates of the divine being conveyed to us through the sages in order to secure the ultimate deliverance of the human soul from the bondage of Samsara.

There is an idea in the West that to kill a man in war (or otherwise) is to destroy his personality. Even those who freely resort to war share this belief, and it is for this reason that they avow that they have recourse to war only as a last resort. It is the absurdity of this position that the blessed Bhagavan exposes in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Such

an absurd view is maintained by people in the West, because they are ignorant of the distinction between the spirit (*Atman*) and the physical tenement (*deha*) to which it has become tied by *karma* in past incarnations. The human body is perishable, but not the human personality (the *Atman*) which is *nitya*, permanent, everlasting, indestructible:—and hence we do not, by killing the body, kill the human personality. The late eminent Indian Christian ecclesiastic the Reverend H. Bower, who was long a popular Tamil examiner in the Madras University, has entirely misunderstood this declaration of the Gita, viz., that, by killing a man's body, we do not (and cannot) destroy his imperishable personality and eternal spirit. He thinks that, if we accept this view as right, no man can be blamed for even murdering another, as he can plead that he only killed his body and not his spirit. Nothing can be a greater absurdity than this criticism of the portion laid down in the Gita. For, human and divine law blames (and punishes) a criminal and murderer for killing the body only, and not the spirit. In the *first* place, it is impossible to kill the spirit, and so no man can or ought to be punished for it. In the *second* place, the clothing of the spirit with the

body of man is the gift of God's grace to him, and for the noblest of all purposes, viz., to realise the glorious self-effulgence of the *One Existence* (spiritual) *without a second*, and no one has the right to deprive another of the life here (of the body) which furnishes the opportunity of achieving such divine self-realisation. In a righteous war, as already understood and explained, when a man gives up his body as an act of sacrifice for the gods (*Yajna*), his heroic act is productive of good to all the world. The Mahabharata says:—"No one should anyway grieve for the hero who has been killed in battle" (*Raja-dharma*, chap. 98). For he attains thereby to the heaven of Svarga. It is the warrior who turns his back upon the foe in retreat and then gets killed that goes to Naraka, the region of the damned and the sinful (*Ib.*). This same section and chapter of the Mahabharata points out in detail how the analogy between war and yajna holds in full—that the elephants form the Ritviks, the horses are Adhvaryus, the flesh of those slain is Havis (offering), the blood therefrom is the sacrificial ghee for pouring into the fire as an oblation, and so on to the minutest details. The warrior's death in the midst of his companions in battle is

considered so exceptionally elevating and sacred that no *tabu* (or pollution) is observed in his case, and no baths or funeral gifts are prescribed (*Ib*) For these and other reasons, war is not considered in India either as sinful or as a destruction of the human personality We also resort to it as a *final* method of gaining human aims when all others have failed,—and a method, too, to be put into practice according to the injunctions to the Dharma sastra If war is an “evil” it is a necessary evil, and not at all—when all the limitations prescribed are observed,—a crime against divine or moral law

What then are these limitations and safeguards? None of these are apparently observed or cared for in Europe In India, they are of the very essence of war In the *first* place we have not here the Satanic institution of ‘militarism’—Universal conscription Even England, under the persistent agitation and pressure from her late eminent soldier and general, the late Lord Roberts, adopted this engine of devilry, this veritable limb of Satan as her reply and challenge to the late Kaiser’s threateningly frequent uncoverings of his ‘mailed fist’ In our own specialised social system of Varnas no such thing could ever conceivably exist.



For fighting was confined only to a small class of the population—the Kshatriyas. There has never existed on earth in any other land or community a class so exalted by chivalry, heroism, self-confidence, or righteousness as our Kshatriyas. H. H. Wilson, the eminent British Orientalist says:—"The Hindu laws of war are very chivalrous and humane and prohibit the slaying of the unarmed, of women, of the old, of the conquered." That "all is fair in love and war" is a maxim which is opposed to all Hindu instincts and traditions can be asserted without fear of contradiction. India, in her palmy days of glorious freedom, was never a "*Nation in arms*," like Germany, France, or Great Britain during the recent World War. In the *second* place, the Indian Dharmic laws of war require that, when war is declared, both the combatant forces and hordes must retire to an open field in the neighbourhood of a jungle far away from the haunts of men and the centres of population, art, and industry in order to carry on the fight. On the other hand, during the European war recently fought, whole nations were enlisted for military purposes and even the gentler sex was called upon to engage in the manufacture of munitions and war material of all kinds. In the

*third* place, the destruction, suffering, and misery caused by wars were only of a limited extent, and confined to narrow bounds, both in regard to the extent of area and population. We, Indians, never could have had so much loss of valuable life,—so much suffering and misery, arising from loss of wealth, of art and beauty,—so much of chaos in industry and social life generally as the late World-War or any other similar war left behind it in Europe. Especially, the aftermath of revenge, hatred, enmity, fear and distrust left behind among the European Nations is one unexampled and impossible in a country like India. A writer says —“A new era has come after the war,—but it is an era of sadness and sorrow, of turmoil, conflict, and contention, of vice, irreligion, and immorality, of lamentation and regret. With all the waste and wreckage, the misery and mourning, the demoralisation caused by the war, how can the golden age appear?” The present insatiable greed among European Nations their panting for fresh colonial possessions and dependencies, their passion for revenge, their fresh inventions of scientific methods for perpetrating wholesale massacres and devastations have produced a bloodthirsty atmosphere

which has never existed before in Europe. Those who want to destroy our ancient system of Dharma and the system of Varna and Asrama which is its support and stronghold ought to ponder over the fact that it is these characteristically Indian institutions that are mainly responsible for the differences we have noticed above in the phenomena and purposes of culture between India and the West. If Western civilisation and culture is the fruit of Christianity, as its missionaries and adherents claim, then we can only pray that we may be saved alike both from Christianity and its fruits of western social life and social institutions. Ruskin says of the nations of Europe:—"The Constitution of their governments, and the clumsy crookedness of their political dealings with each other, may be such as to prevent either of them from knowing the actual cause for which they have gone to war." We can by no means accept this white-washing method and procedure of one who, in some quarters, is looked upon as a prophet and a teacher. We are of opinion that both the phenomena mentioned by Ruskin—viz., the constitution of the European governments and the crookedness of their dealings with each other and other communities in all other quarters and con-

tinents—alike spring from one and the same source. Even the nature and aims of their wars—which form a part and parcel of the “crooked dealings” of these European communities—is to be ascribed to the same primal source and necessary cause. The creeds of men are a fair clue to all they have been and done in the past, and are seen to be or to do today. The creed of science—of biological science—is that man is descended from the Catarrhine Ape. Against this irrational faith and creed, we, Hindus set forth our own ancient Vedic faith and creed of the Rishis,—viz., that man is descended from the body of the Divine Being. The European man can never divest himself of his original ferocity and capacity for wanton mischief or injustice in his dealings with his fellow men. This fact alone sufficiently explains not only his brutal methods of warfare, but even some of the cruel and unjustifiable dogmas—not at all to be found in the precepts of the divine Jesus—which he has imported into the so-called Christian creed and which clearly tulle with the problems of sin and its punishment (or atonement) in such a manner as to produce all the degradation and brutality which we of to-day notice and deplore, in man’s dealings, political or military, with his fellow-men of

other climes and races, especially those who belong to the civilisations of Asia. At the same time, we cannot fail to notice that of late there is a welcome change in men's interpretation and comprehension of the ancient and true sacred teachings and precepts and we trust that it will lead to such a transformation in men's characters and dealings with others as will make the future course of international dealings in peace and war different from what they have been in the past. Especially, on our present topic of war, an early change is necessary and desirable. We have mentioned above some of our own humane and just rules of warfare. They are conspicuous by their absence in all European war—in fact there were no rights of war. And as for diplomacy, we cannot imagine anything more confused and anarchic,—for, as a distinguished French writer explains, “the diplomat should (only) know how to conduct all negotiations in a way favourable to his master, to beguile the diplomats with whom he treats in order to make them agree to the most advantageous conditions all the while holding himself on guard against seduction, *dissimulating his intentions while inspiring confidence*.” Diplomacy was, in a word, synonymous with dissimulation, and war with brutality

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

### The Causes of War,—in India and in Europe.

A living English writer says :—"The causes of war as of anything else, are not to be found in events. No event is, or could be, related to another event as cause and effect. Events are caused by forces, and the events of history are caused by men, who in their turn are governed by their minds. The causes of events are therefore in men's minds." (*Fielding Hall*). One alleged peculiarity in the European mind is that it has developed the *senti-ment of "patriotism."* Every European Community and individual wants to see that its own country should possess the largest amount of glory, dignity, prestige, and influence in the world. The vast increase of armaments in every country nation in the world against which the recent Washington Conference was aimed is due mainly to this circumstance. On the other hand, in India, we have always risen above this narrow ideal to some thing broader and

more Cosmopolitan and Universal. Sri Sankaracharya says in a very famous Sloka :—"My mother is the Goddess Parvati; my father is the God Paramesvara; all bhaktas (worshippers) of Siva are my blood-connections; my own native land (Svadesa) comprises all the three worlds." Sri Sankaracharya here clearly means by "*Siva-bhaktas*" only the inhabitants of all the worlds—for he expressly states that his native land refers not to any one country, with its limited population, but to all the three worlds. He (Sankaracharya) denied that he had any one country as his own, and he looked on all men as brothers. Swami Vivekananda, too, has told us that India is the only country in the world where no one is regarded as a foreigner,—it is, in fact, "the only country to which all souls must come, wending their way to God." Freedom from the bondage of Samsara is the one aim of the Sanatana Dharma, and all souls claim, during their life here, to rise to their highest conception of Dharma and to salvation through Dharma as its goal. Hence, India is a holy land of deliverance from the bondage of matter and of soul-realisation for all men, and belongs therefore to no one community of men in particular. Hence,

we, Indians, have only *recently* imported, into this country, the "*ideal of patriotism*" It is this sentiment of *communal selfishness and patriotism* that is at the bottom of the "*hatred*" which the belligerent nations on both sides in the recent world-war felt for each other, and do still feel even after the war It is also responsible for the "*pride*" which each European Nation feels on account of its own achievements, and wealth and possessions This pride, in its turn, begets *envy* in each less fortunate or less wealthy country for that which is more wealthy and successful It is these circumstances that account for the swollen armaments of each of the Great Powers of Europe and of the tremendous *préparation* for aggression on all sides made by Germany in order to overthrow the might of Great Britain and its treaty of alliance with France

In the second place, each great Western Nation and power wants to build up for itself the status of a World Power by taking possession—by means fair or foul—of the territories and by exploiting or controlling the resources, of the weak and unorganized peoples and races of Asia and Africa People talk highly of "*West for East and East for West*,"



—but the truth is that the West aims not at what is called “mutual development,”—but at the gradual emasculation and deterioration, and demoralisation of the East—through a growing “struggle for existence,” economic and cultural. At first, forcible methods were attempted. As Mr. Soothill says :—  
 “Force may have had its value in the past, but it will not solve our problem.” It is, however, used, whenever it promises to succeed. But ordinarily, the powerful exploiting races of the West work by various subterranean influences to “keep up the civil wars, the floods, and fumes, and plagues, the infant mortality, and the struggle for existence” of the less organised races and people. But the application of various forcible and coercive methods, and even wars, are not of infrequent occurrence. *All these facts, however, apply to such countries as China and Moslem lands,—not to India.* Our object here is only to show *one of the chief causes of modern wars in various parts of the world.* India has now settled down to a peaceful course of development, political and economic, under her able and progressive rulers. Hence, no question of *wars* national or racial, can arise here. Our Vedic Dharma is of great help to us now by bringing about the concili-

ation and the consolidation of races and communities through its gentle methods of influencing the minds and culture of the members of all Indian communities

A *third* cause of war is the unnumbered failures of European civilisation. The progress of science has produced the deadliest weapons for use in killing men *in masse*. The system of elections for members of parliament has developed numerous evils,—*viz*, caucus organisations, the issuing of lying election manifestoes, the rise of the “boss” and lastly the unsexing of women by securing them votes. Lastly, though the formation of vast imperial states has put an end to actual wars on the field of battle, it has brought increased strife among the various communities comprised in the imperial commonwealths on the floors of parliaments, or by the promotion of social hatreds and racial exclusiveness, or by bringing about the conflicts of labour and capital. Syndicalism, Anarchism, and communism have produced a wide spread ferment. At any moment, social strife, industrial rivalries and jealousies, and wide-spread dissensions and divergences on matters religious and educational, or of conventional morality, might result in civil war, or something akin to it.

It has been well said that conflicts of various sorts may all be comprised under the designation of being "*Nature's method of curing hidden diseases*,"—bodily, communal, cultural, and economical.

All these circumstances are true, indeed, of other countries, other systems of civilisation, and other ideals of society. In India, however, as already stated, we recognise that war is one of the laws of our Sanatana Dharma. War finds its sufficient reason and essential justification in the needs of life political, social and individual. In the *first* place, there is need for a specialisation of human faculties and energies. The Indian system of Varnas has ever comprised a Kshatriya Varna with hearts of steel and faculties of endurance and resistance absolutely unrivalled in the annals of human society. Rama, Bhishma, Arjuna, &c., are no doubt extreme instances of martial development even among the Kshatriyas,—but we are sometimes best able to arrive at a just estimate of the true significance of facts by considering extreme, and not the average, instances and cases where it is developed and exhibited. Their exploits, adventures, and achievements are absolutely unique and unexampled in the annals of the human race. All of them achieved their triumphs

as members of the Kṣhatriya Varna and pursued the calling of war as a *Dharma*, and not from any of the motives or causes which have been pointed out above as leading to war in foreign societies with a civilisation and aims and organisation different from the ancient Aryan and Hindu social system. In India, war is always resorted to as an *ultimate* resource when all others have failed, and only in cases where the most patent and absolute rules of *Dharma* have been violated or set at naught in the most wanton and wicked manner. War acts as a safety valve, and is not left to be determined according to nature's methods in cases where, if a fever or a storm, or an earthquake does not arise, the result would be the patient's death or the havoc and destruction of cities or districts or even a wholesale submergence of an island or continent by the operation of some gigantic and irresistible force or agency of unknown character or incalculable extent and duration. In the *second* place, Indian wars were never known to be, as they are now merely mechanical modes of slaughtering your fellow men. Indian war was a *Dharma*—a law of righteousness, a means for the soul's elevation to higher worlds of bliss and enjoyment, and a final method or expedient of obtain-

ing redress for injuries sustained from a foe,—such as encroachment on one's rights to a kingdom, property, suzerainty, and so on. In the *third* place, we do not need what has been called "*the moral equivalent of war*," or indeed anything else in the shape of an equivalent. The obvious reason is that nothing can take the place of war,—for it is itself the *final resort* when other means of gaining our ends have been tried and found wanting, and is itself a rule of Dharma, to be put into force under the restrictions prescribed for its operation and adoption. As to the suggestion regarding the "*moral equivalent of war*," the late Professor James has said :—"We have grown literally afraid to be poor. We despise any one who elects to be poor in order to simplify and save his inner life. If he does not join in the general scramble and part with the money-making market, we deem him spiritless and lacking in ambition. We have lost the power even of imagining what the ancient idealisation of poverty could have meant, the liberation from material attachment; the unbribed soul; the manlier indifference; the paying our way by what we are or do and not by what we have; the right to fling away life at any moment irresponsibly,—the more æsthetic trim—in short the

moral fighting shape. When we of the so called better classes are scared, as men were never scared in history, at material ugliness and hardship, when we put off our marriage until our home can be artistic and quake at the thought of having a child without a banking account and doomed to manual labour, it is time for thinking men to protest against so unmanly and irreligious a state of opinion. I recommend this matter to your serious tendering, for it is certain that the prevalent fear of poverty is the worst moral disease from which our civilisation suffers. All this may be true of Western society. But we do not see how poverty and its trials however firmly and unflinchingly met and endured can dispense with war, or be 'an equivalent of war,' in any sense. In India, our Sannyasins voluntarily accept the vows of poverty and wandering about without a home either to accomplish their own spiritual perfection or carry spiritual teaching to the masses so as to make them conform to the precepts of Dharma. But this high ideal is always reserved for the few individuals who are favourably situated for its adoption. For all others and for the community as a whole, poverty is not desirable or feasible and can only land them in troubles and perils of all kinds. Especially, in our

Raja Dharma, the King is always called on to secure a full "treasury" and keep it well guarded and replenished from time to time. The *Santi Parva* lays down that the power and position of the King and his state cannot be maintained if he neglects his *Kosa* (treasury). A king, as we have already more than once pointed out, is called on to take taxes from his subjects, but to spend his resources in promoting his people's happiness. No king can maintain himself in strength or his subjects in comfort and peace, if he neglect the material resources of his state. A king who fails here can never maintain himself against his enemies in times of trouble and is sure to bring ruin upon himself and his people in the end. War is itself an act of Dharma,—and a King and his people must be rich and steadily grow in their productive resources if they are to earn divine grace by the practice of His Dharmic laws and commands. It is only the individual—and one who has reached a high state of spiritual development—that can rise to the practice of *Akinchanya* (owning no property). The Gita says that it is "at the end of unnumbered births" that man attains to the true Knowledge of the blessed Bhagavan's self effulgence. Yajnavalkya and others voluntarily gave up home and riches for

the purpose of meditating on the same and thereby attaining to freedom from the bondage of Samsara. Tradition says that the marvellously-gifted Śaṅkara-charya became a Sannyasin in his sixteenth year and wandered about from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and even went to Persia lifting Maya's veil everywhere by his teachings and discourses. The ideal of absolute poverty is only possible for such as these, and not for others. There are many Yajnas which entail enormous effort and expenditure,—for example Asvamedha, Rajasuya, Visvajit, &c. Hence, the Indian State and people must be rich, and not poor. The Indian Grihastha (householder) must perform Yajnas, too, for the securing of the welfare of humanity, and most of them involve a good deal of expense. Not poverty, but riches, is our national and State ideal,—and Dharma needs and enforces it.

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

### War and the League of Nations.

THE efforts of Ex-President Wilson—a true follower of the Prince of Peace and his Gospel of Love—were well-meant, and he succeeded in getting the League of Nations formally constituted and installed. We think, however, that it has provoked no enthusiasm so far, and its meetings so far have been confined to the settlement or discussion of questions of minor importance. We doubt very much whether the world's peace can be secured by it. We think that only a universal state on the model or ideal which the Hindu Dharma enjoined—the “*Sarvabhaumaraja*”—can promote peace, though it cannot end war. The bellicose impulse is inherent in man's nature. Hence an ultimate centre of force is needed to settle the disputes among men and communities when passions run high and threaten to plunge them headlong into the forcible modes of settlement known as war. The best proof that wars cannot be avoided is that even the United States has engaged in two big wars and has had also to indulge

in the luxury of a civil war, as the only means available for abolishing slavery in the Southern States. No doubt President Lincoln enunciated in noble language the peace ideal and aspirations of the United States — "With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us finish the work we are in—to bind up one another's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and orphans, to do all which may achieve a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations." The subsequent wars with Spain and Germany prove that America's aspirations after a "just and lasting peace with all nations," however sincere, were bound to prove futile, if not a mere dream of spiritual fervour or speculation. The Civil war now going on among the Irish even after they have gained the substance of freedom shows how impossible it is to curb the human impulses to strife. The unity of Italy and Germany could only be achieved by several wars. The historian, Mr. Hodges says truly — "Every great peace conference builds with a view to permanence, but the result of their labours has been too often but a sad example of the vanity of human wishes." It is easy enough to blame, as Mr

Hodges does, "the old world before 1789, the world of absolute kings and class privileges" for the wars of previous epochs. But the armed democracies of to day are as capable of indulging the war fever as the monarchies and aristocracies now passing away from the Western world. So long as men pay respect to those who achieve success and so long as men cannot endure a humiliation,—so long as there are men of leading in the West who can "claim for war that it brings out qualities of courage, self-denial, discipline, endurance, enthusiasm, that are atrophied in peace time, and so war is a creative force,"—so long as the impulse to self assertion is inherent in the average man,—we cannot prevent communities from resorting to war, we cannot prevent men from joining others who are like minded in attacking those who thwart their common purposes and aims.

If the League of Nations develops into the one military state in the world by the abolition of all national armies or navies or the reduction on such a scale as to amount to a practical abolition of them the opportunities of war will become reduced to a satisfactory extent, and this state of things is as much as can be reasonably expected of an imperfect world like this. The same will be true of a single universal

Empire comprising all other states within its dominating influence and control. As far as human vision can penetrate into the future, there seems no possibility of achieving either of these alternatives and thereby minimising the occasions for war. Our Dharma has recognised the essential weakness of human nature and even from the dawn of history, insisted on the need and necessity of a "*Sarva-bhauma Raja*", a single universal Empire and world-State.

It is doubtless true that the qualities of courage, endurance and discipline are as inherent in the nature of man as the impulse to quarrel and have a free fight. The claim made for war that war alone is the pre destined nursery for their growth and that they become atrophied in a time of peace cannot therefore be allowed. And it is even true that in the stress of a conflict they are often ignored. A civilisation in which peace has such a deplorable effect must necessarily be based on slender foundations,—i.e., on false conceptions of right and wrong. In India our conceptions of right and wrong are based upon the "eternal" Dharma. In the West the standard and bases of morality are ever varying and still unsettled. Moreover, with us freedom is recognised as the very

essence of the human spirit—as an end in itself, as the final and supreme ever-present goal of the life of social unity or even the doing of right in all human relations as a means to such achievement. The moment war on the field of battle is over, social and industrial war among classes commences and is pursued on a scale and with destructive effects compared with which even the horrors of war shrink into insignificance. To the war of classes is, in these days, added a war of sexes, the most insidious and perilous of all. The very nature of women in the West seems to be changing under the stress of adverse influences, and how the fight for political power under the franchise now extended to them will affect it remains to be seen. In Europe, thinkers have occasionally risen who have expressed their dissatisfaction with the franchise as an effective method of ascertaining the popular will in modern democracies. We have, in several of our previous contributions on the State, fully pointed out how our Dharma has devised a method less apt to breed and develop the combative impulses of men and as efficacious as any other for ascertaining the popular will while restraining its unreasoning impulses and ungovernable passions: It is the European method of consulting the popular

will by *enforcing* the franchise on the millions or masses who have neither the time nor the qualifications needed, nor even the inclination or wish, to form opinions on far-reaching questions of national importance that is responsible for the uncertainties of policy and for the frequent and capricious changes of Ministry noticeable everywhere, especially in Great Britain. The Parliamentary history of Great Britain in its relations to Ireland during the last 40 or 50 years is proof positive to indicate to us that British democracy is a delusion and a sham, if not also a snare to entrap the unwary. Unless the great mass of British electors despised equally all British parties and British Ministers they could not have rejected Mr Gladstone's Home Rule Ministries or kept in power so long the Ministry of Lloyd George which,—at the instance of a foreigner and a Boer, too, so recently a bitter and relentless foe of England,—became suddenly, but too late converted to the wisdom of the policy of granting Home Rule and consented to the treaty which brought into existence the Irish Free State. The House of Commons is always "led," and has but rarely been known to give a lead to the Ministry in power. We have already shown how the members of the popular chamber have to

depend upon the favour of Caucuses and Bosses for securing their election, and they remain their puppets while they occupy their seats. It is no wonder that Socialism and Syndicalism spread and gain an increasing number of adherents,—that the Labour Party has doubted its strength in the House of Commons at the recent General Election in Great Britain. There is far more honesty, far more love of freedom for its own sake and of true manliness in the British Labour Party than in the traditional groups or factions known as Liberals and Conservatives brought together by the love of power and aggressive strife. The Labour Party loves freedom truly, and has shown its fidelity to the cause of freedom by supporting Home Rule for Ireland in the past, and now for India in its recent election manifesto. People who truly love freedom need not be taught or *forced*, to confer freedom. No people who truly love freedom can endure the agony of seeing others kept in slavery and subjection. It is the Arya Dharma alone that has grappled successfully with the problem of co-ordinating different races and communities so as to enable them to enjoy the same rights of citizenship and political freedom under one and the same constitution. Imperial India, ancient or mediæval, in its heyday of indepen-

dence and manly strength, never imposed political slavery or subjection and freely allowed the right of self-determination to all the states comprised in the continent of Bharata-varsha in accordance with the precepts of Dharma. So long as the ideal of freedom is not of the right sort, so long as it is pursued only as a means and not as an end in itself, so long as it is preserved as a monopoly and not freely conferred on all so as to prove an efficient cementing force and bond of empire,—so long as man loves power and dominance over fellow-man,—freedom can only be a mere name and an empty delusion. It is not peace when long-continued, but a civilisation which is false in its foundations and in its essentials, that prevents the development of human virtues or their practice in daily life. A true civilisation is that which promotes human freedom,—freedom for the individual and group, all civilisations are false that impose obstacles to the human enjoyment of freedom in the fullest measure. The League of Nations has failed and must fail, to prevent war. Mr Henderson, the great Labour Leader, says enough to convince us why it is bound to fail. He says —“It is a reasoned, intelligent, and scientific attempt to construct international machinery to administer justice between nations



with a view to dispose of all points of friction which may arise. In reality, it will be an International Court of Justice to which all disputes between adhering nations which cannot be settled by diplomatic means must be referred to arbitration. Such disputes may be either justifiable, *i. e.*, disputes which are capable of being decided by recognised international law ; or non-justifiable disputes, *i. e.*, which cannot be covered by international jurisprudence but which can be settled by moral law, *provided the nations are disposed to accept moral law as being on at least as high a plane as law made by man.*" The proviso practically abandons the entire position and argument previously elaborated on behalf of the League of Nations. No moral law can have a truly ethical or spiritual value for humanity which does not recognise the elementary facts and phenomena of man's nature, as they have been made known to us and become duly recognised by all. Mr. Henderson is fully aware of this truth. For he avows:—"Even this method (*viz.*, the settlement of disputes by moral law) of maintaining the world-peace may not be fully satisfactory and successful unless it has the full sanction of the peoples behind it." Mr. Henderson clearly contrasts "the moral law" with "the law made

by man" in the extract above quoted. The "moral law," therefore, is, in his view, law *not* made by man, but by Him who is above all men and ought not to require any higher sanction, for there is none higher than the Supreme Being who creates and sustains the universe. In this Holy Land, we recognise, in full measure, that the Dharma and its precepts are the "commands" of the Supreme. All Dharmic precepts and commands constitute together the "moral law" which we, Hindus, accept as our ideal and guide in life, and accept, too, without qualification or exception. The Dharma applies to all times,—to times of war and times of peace, and solves all the problems of humanity in a perfectly legitimate and satisfactory manner and in such a manner as to secure to man the goal of true freedom. Dharma alone can "hold together" a world fallen to atoms and reconstruct it, too, so as to form a new and undreamed of fraternity of peoples and democracies co-operating for the harmony which is to lead to the goal of Freedom,—Freedom for all to love and serve all here,—Freedom here and hereafter to realise the Unity which, when realised, is non-different from Realisation and freedom.

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## CHAPTER XXV.

### Private and Collective Property.

THE transition from ideal to ideal, from leader to leader, from one form of activity to another, and from institution to institution is very rapid in Europe. On the subject of property, we have had a rapid change of views,—first from private property to collective property, then from collective property back again to private property under the influence of the economists, and now there is an attempt to combine private property in the individual with the institutions of state socialism promoting the accumulation and holding of large funds by the state and their expenditure on objects of public utility which are beyond the resources of individuals. In India, on the other hand, our Dharma has always reconciled the two institutions of private and collective property, and has also prevented the state from interfering with their working in an arbitrary manner by the fiat of any one dressed in a little brief authority. There are, however, *novi homines* among us in these days who think that the rules and regulations of Dharma are themselves

arbitrary and antagonistic to human freedom and happiness. Such a view seems, however, to be based on a misconception of the true source of freedom. Some rules and regulations are found to exist everywhere and at all times. This would not have been the case if they had proved antagonistic to human liberty, justice or moral improvement. In reality, they are the essential and indispensable conditions for the stability of human virtue and the progress of human freedom. The only difference is that, while in Europe Laws and regulations are man-made and made under the influence of human passions and the stress of human needs, in India we believe that our Dharma is Heaven's Command and therefore is assured of permanence ; and there can also be no doubt of the beneficence of its effects on human character and welfare. It has, no doubt, its periods of advance and decline, owing to human whims and fancies, but on the whole the faith of the Hindu Communities in its permanence and beneficence has never yet wavered or waned.

A well-known Indian proverb says :—"All men love gold." The love of gold is a universal instinct of the race, and the conditions of the world's past since it came upon the scene have developed it in

all its present potency and perfection. It is only in India that our hermits and Sannyasins are called upon to wander about from place to place and never to touch a piece of gold or silver, or any coin of any value, and to discard all possessions and property. Such men have gained an immeasurable height of spirituality through their love of God and men and their renunciation of all property and family connexions so that even the slightest recrudescence of the love of Mammon in any form,—even the springing of it as a thought, however momentary and casual—is regarded as an inextinguishable sin and fall. A person fallen after so high an ascent (*arudhapatita*) is regarded as a moral leper and shunned and denounced by his fellow-men everywhere. No one on the other hand, commands in India such universal reverence as a Sannyasin true to his vows of renunciation; and the best and noblest of householders, however eminent their social position by reason of their merits or dignities and possessions, feel bound to prostrate themselves in cheerful adoration and humility before men who have gained such altitudes of spiritual ascent and realisation as to place them *almost* on a level with Godhead itself. Especially after the advent of Buddhism in this country this worship of the anchorite

or monk has attained to proportions not contemplated in Hinduism and in fact even the degenerate Hinduism of the post-Buddhist epoch has to some extent succeeded in recovering the *status quo ante* in regard to the social rank or position of the Sannyasins. Still, it is the Sannyasins alone that are called upon or expected to discard all love of gold and to abstain even from touching a coin but to throw themselves entirely on the charitable instincts of the community and its devotion to Dharma for their food and clothing and for the due fulfilment of the duties of the stage or station in life they have adopted in order to secure—or even to assure—for themselves the gaining of liberation from Samsara. All others are allowed to earn and hold property.

- The Sanatana Dharma does not adopt the fanatical attitude of condemnation which Socialism in its earlier forms at least and Communism still holds to be right in order to bring about an all round betterment in the lot of humanity in the future. At the same time the Sanatana Dharma does not entertain the delusion that society is kept going because the individual possesses private property. For not only the Sannyasins, but large numbers of other people not only in this poverty stricken country, but even in other lands

pass through life without being able to accumulate any property or even the most distant prospect and possibility of possessing property. Their sole idea and effort is to make both ends meet from day to day and month to month. The Sanatana Dharma adapts itself to all healthy instincts and thereby helps man to develop his individuality and lead a healthy and useful life until the time comes when desires cease and the renunciation of all property and possessions becomes possible in order to attain to the joy of inward peace and self-realisation. The reformed Socialism of today has learned that "the ownership of things will always be a means of expressing personality." The Sanatana Dharma has ever held fast to the eternal truth that, as man is in reality the One Self only without a second, even his body, senses, intellect, and will are exterior to him and are given to him as his own by God to help him to attain to a knowledge of his essential nature, in truth and in spirit, and free from all delusive admixtures. It is clear, therefore, that man, as he owns his body and mind, his senses and passions and will, must own also whatever is needed to maintain them in a healthy condition so as to help his onward march to

of all wealth and furnishes the material from which capital is saved and invested in industry. Hence, the Indian Dharma made the preservation of the village community and of its machinery of self-government, and through them of the maintenance and recognition of the collective ownership of land objects of constant watchfulness by the local authorities. The Village Council had to arrange for the periodical redistribution of its lands among the heads of families resident in the village and recognised as forming members of the village community. The redistribution and re-settlement of lands ordinarily took place once in seven years and in some cases even more frequently; and the theory was that individual ownership of land ceased for the moment and that the community resumed its collective ownership—so that the fresh act of redistribution and re-settlement might be a proclamation on its own part, as well as a recognition on the part of the individual assignees and owners, of its continued retention of the proprietorships of all the lands and the landed interest of the villages grouped together under a single communal and local organisation and its machinery of self-government. The creed of Socialism condemns the principles of individual freedom and individual proprietary



rights in land and even in industrial capital and indulges in an unqualified assertion—in fact it makes a *fetish*—of the principle of the collective rights of ownership. The difference between the Socialistic creed and our Dharma is essentially political—the former going so far as to extend the sphere of the legislative administrative, and coercive activity of the central state in order to maintain collective rights in land and capital, while the latter jealously guards the principle of decentralisation and the voluntary action of the local community under its chosen guardians and leaders for the reconciliation of both collective and individual rights without loss of communal strength or individual freedom. The Dharma recognises both principles as needed for healthy and vigorous life and insists that neither should be suppressed or sacrificed. The Dharma prevents the conflict of the opposing ideals of State interference for the maintenance of collective organisation in agriculture and industry and of absolute reliance on the individual for the guarding of his neighbours moral freedom and proprietary rights. In the modern world the State has become imperial and strident in its action of overleaping all established and conventional barriers raised to prevent encroach-

ments on individual rights, economic and social, and on the communal rights to local self-government and even national self-determination. This is one extreme,—the apotheosis of the State by the *doctrinaire* Socialism once active, but now defunct and only surviving in the idea that the State, by its administrative activity and even without any legislative measures, can so guide the voluntary action of industrial groups and chiefs (or agents) as to influence the just distribution of income among the classes engaged in industry, so that no one class might exploit others and all may be enabled to maintain the ideal of the good life for the individual labourer and the working-class family according to the standards of respectability now current and believed to be conventionally adequate or acceptable. The other extreme is the purely speculative faith of the Anarchist who would dispense with the State or non-co-operates with it and relies entirely upon a *doctrinaire* individualism and its apotheosis of ethical action evolving into an unconscious and unintended reconciliation of egoism and altruism, of the freedom of the individual with the strength of voluntary group organisations of all kinds. The Indian Dharma takes a middle course between these extremes. It preserves

the State, but its central authority is rarely exercised so as to constitute a powerful bureaucracy constantly encroaching upon local and village autonomy and its self-sufficing and self-governing machinery. It maintains in vigour all local organisations and groups so as to reconcile the principles of private and collective property which are both needed to destroy the existence side by side of the wealth of multi-millionaires and the galling destitution of famished and half-fed men, unemployed or under-employed and so constituting a menace to true civilisation and morality. Dharma alone has helped to place human ideas and activities on the basis of a true harmony between motives which are material and economical and those which are moral and spiritual, so that every man may be assured of the conditions necessary to assure individual freedom and enabled to pass through life without being enslaved by the industrial machine, the controlling magnates, or the tyranny exercised by the conditions of the market.

We can now see how little truth there is in Karl Max's famous definition, 'Property is theft.' Of course, private property in land and capital can be destroyed, and thereby one of the material conditions

of individual freedom and the spiritual advances needed for the ultimate liberation of the soul will disappear (vide Gita, VI, 41). Such a course will only demonstrate how blind—as we shall show later—is ‘civilised’ man in the West to the real source of evil in civilisation. Property, individual or collective, is not that source, as we have demonstrated above. We have shown in full what benefit it confers and how necessary—and even inevitable—it is for the safeguarding of human liberty and progress all round. Dharma enjoins it, and on grounds which are sustainable and convincing even from a purely positive and scientific point of view.

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## CHAPTER XXVI

### How Property is Attacked and Defended.

INDUSTRIALISM and the industrial epoch commenced in the West about a century and a half back, when mechanical invention ushered in the growth of man's power and empire over his material environment. The progress of invention, the advance in the application of energy, the improvement in the means of transport together form a record of progress which borders on the miraculous, but which is so obvious and hackneyed in the telling that it need not here be dwelt upon. The result gained is that production has gone up by bounds and leaps, and throughout the West the former age of deficit and destitution has been replaced by the age of surplus and surfeit. The passage of the world from the era of handicraft to the era of machinery, and from the era of steam to that of untiring activity and effective interest in production on account of the great and growing increase of wages and profits,—all these circumstances point to a growth in productive goods and services and a

growth in human movement and human intercourse which is nothing short of a stupendous miracle. And yet, we see that the world at large continues to suffer from the same misery and poverty as ever before and to work at productive industry with the same energy and for the same length of time as counted in daily working hours as ever before. No doubt the recent World-war brought about an enormous and unprecedented waste of accumulated resources and of productive power and energy through loss of life,—but, even without it, the substitution of the age of surplus for the preceding ages of deficit had not resulted in bringing in the golden age or the mellennium which has long been dreamed of or hoped for by Utopian dreamers and even by reformers and philanthropists, who have actively associated themselves with the conditions of human life from day to day with a view to their amelioration. The civilised world is not able to extricate itself from its tangled and chaotic wilderness of inequalities of difference and penury, the contrasts of the mansion and the slum, and the growing difference between the easy non-chalance allotted to the share-proprietor and the exhausted frame and the crazy, broken spirit of the care-worn worker of today.

The blame for all these contrasts and failures is laid at the door of the institution of private property—to the social regime in which every one is allowed to find work and wages or employ his capital and gain his profits without any interference from the state or society with the working of the economic laws of supply and demand and cost of production as determining the normal or market price of commodities. Not only the economics of profits and wages but the old doctrines of rent as the surplus of income over cost and of interest as the price of saving were vehemently attacked as the fatal and sinful offspring of the same institution. The responsibility of the old principle of legislative non interference in domestic industry and trade and the old doctrine of free trade in foreign goods was also traced to the same source. The old economists were firm in their adhesion to the view that unrestricted competition under what was known from the time of Adam Smith as the System of Natural Liberty could alone secure even handed justice in the economic relations between man and man. It was this citadel and rock on which was built up the classical economics of the past that has now been vehemently attacked and battered down. There is no such

thing as a system of profits, wages or of prices which alone accords with the cost of production, no such thing as a normal or provisional phenomenon of the relation of exchange. There is no permanence in this relation, but only a chance result which is due to bargaining between the different parties to the transactions of production and exchange. Moreover, the interests and activities of the *consumer* are rarely noticed and allowed for by the old and "orthodox" school of writers on Economics. For him, the price is fixed not according to cost of production, but according to his own needs and resources. No doubt, supply and demand is a comprehensive term, but "cost of production" is vague and elusive and even puts us on the wrong track, it is manifestly wrong and misleading; and, in fact, there is no such thing as a proportion or relation, necessary and natural, between price and cost of production. It was Cairnes who first pointed out that while price, wages, and profits are all forms of reward, the ideas of cost, work, and management are forms of sacrifice; and so there can be no relation, constant or casual, between two such opposite phenomena. Moreover, there is no means of measuring cost of production. For, on every side we notice nothing but constant variation<sup>s</sup>



in the amount, the skill (natural or acquired), and the training required to produce commodities by different labouring men at different times and periods of life and in different occupations,—variations, also, in the amounts of time or muscular force expended by each in the performance of the work entrusted to him.—Similarly, the avalanche of criticism levelled against the old “orthodox” doctrine of rent has been irresistible and enormous. Neither the rent of land nor the price of corn is due to cost of production. Rent, high or low, is mere “unearned increment,” even as high dividends and profits are,—and these latter are due to the varying conditions of production and the market for the sale of produce.

After all this has been said—and no one disputes the substantial truth and justice of the views thus propounded—it remains true also that it is only the institution of private property that ensures the *maximum amount of produce* under existing economic conditions of production and exchange. No doubt, this demand for maximum production in return for labour and capital expended in industry is responsible for a good deal of the exploitation, the war of classes, factory ill-treatment of men, women, and children, and race-injustices prevailing in the

world. But the destruction of private property is sure to inflict a serious injury on the productive results of labour. The evils mentioned cannot be laid at the door of the system of distribution now in force. The system of distribution now existing in the West is due to the prevalence of the Darwinian idea that struggle and competition is the only possible law and ideal under which men can live and thrive in the world. It is the Darwinian Gospel of—"Marry, multiply, let the strongest live and the weakest die"—that is responsible for all the heartlessness that lies at the basis of conflicts of labour and capital and all the exploitation of "dependent" or "subordinate" communities or administrations that is now a disgrace to European and Christian civilisation. It is this same heartless gospel of Darwinism—a gospel which is the true basis of the religion of Christianity, so-called, now prevailing in Europe and which is propagated on the one hand, by the missionary going forth with the protecting sword of the Christian administrator or soldier and, on the other, by the efficiency for exploitation of the Christian trade organisation—that forms a source of danger to all the ancient and true religions of the world prevailing in Asia and even to the true religion of Jesus,—if it

can be gathered at all from the tainted sources now available to us

We have referred above to the system of distribution as the causal source of the evils of the prevailing economic system in Europe. We have done so, because it is what the organisation of working men in the West have chiefly in view when they force on societies and governments there the war of classes now threatening the very foundations of society. But in truth, the principle of justice however essential to the stability of the State, can never heal the wounds of the heart of man. Nor can the war of organised and regimented classes ever succeed in giving a practical turn to the search after justice and the conflict of opinion which is bound to divide men when they attempt to decide what is just in the division of the surplus after deducting the cost of production. Moreover, the State will also come in as an interested party,—interested in the division of the spoil and in its own share of the income and interested also on account of its having to fulfil its function of peace-preservation in the land where it rules. The State will have the last word for itself, even where conciliation and arbitration boards have

been brought into existence to help in reaching a settlement.

The Dharma, on the other hand, works by basing itself on the principle of love and renunciation and by the method of integration and co-ordination of functions uniting all sections of society into one organism, and at the same time ensuring the promotion and the permanence of life by placing the final goal of human purpose and perfection in the realisation of the Atman which is beyond the life and evolution of the social organism. Professor Bertrand Russell, in the following immortal words, utters a truth which appeals to the Indian heart with irresistible force:—"In order to promote life, it is necessary to value something other than mere life. . Life devoted only to life is animal, without any real human value, incapable of preserving men permanently from weariness and the feeling that all is vanity. If life is to be fully human, it must serve some end which seems, in some sense, outside human life, some end which is impersonal and above mankind, such as God, or truth, or beauty. Those who best promote life do not have life for their purpose. They aim rather at what seems like a gradual incarnation, a bringing into our human existence of some-

thing eternal, something that appears to human imagination to live in a heaven remote from strife and failure and the devouring jaws of Time. Contact with the eternal world—even if it be a world of our imagining—brings a strength and a fundamental peace which cannot be wholly destroyed by the struggles and apparent failures of our temporal life.” Human life in India, in accordance with these valuable thoughts and truths, always aims at the freedom and the perfection of the human spirit as the goal of life, and therefore at something which is beyond all the limitations of the world of Samsara, whether in this life or in the life of Elysian enjoyments in Svarga or elsewhere. Further, the co-ordination and integration of the divisions or classes in human society through the distribution of functions among them is to be achieved by the abolition of all competition and by each *confining itself to its own Svadharma*, according to the requirement of the Gita. Thus, the much-abused separation of Varnas is intended to achieve the organismal unity of human society. The Brahmin, the Kshatriya, the Vaisya and the Sudra has each his own special functions allotted to him, and must not encroach, upon another’s in the normal life-conditions of society. The renunciation of all

other kinds of activity is the essential condition on which alone the principle of Svadharma can become actualised in the practice of life. Social unity and co-operation is gained through contented and peaceful resignation and abstention from the multiplication of wants which is regarded as the sole and sufficient basis of modern and Western civilisation. The ideal of competitive strife—of struggle for existence and survival of the fittest—is one opposed as the poles to the Indian ideal of peaceful co-operation and unity among all men and groups of men. The true and ancient system of *Chatur-Varnya* could only prevail among a people where the religion of the Vedanta and the joint family system are both active, and people find the higher life of resignation and the practice of charity alone make for the achievement of the higher life of man as distinguished from the grovelling of the ordinary man in the gross and engrossing pleasures of the senses. Such new life and ideals can only become possible if we follow the teachings of our ancient Rishis in regarding the “Four disciplines” (*Sadhana-chatushtaya*) as the preliminaries for reaching the goal of life. This higher life and these higher ideals can only become possible for man if he can keep himself above want

and does not become the sport of constantly-changing circumstances. The Dharma defends property when it is limited to what is gained by Svadharma, and wants are *not* multiplied for their own sake,—when all men help each other to promote loving sympathy and brotherhood in the race and prevent the strife and competition which in the end serve only to conspire to convert men into a pack of hounds and wolves ready to tear each other to pieces in the attempt of each to satisfy its own hunger and want.

Svadharma, by bringing about peace and unity and co-operation among men and by placing the goal of life in the attainment of the lotus-feet of God, makes for loving peace and brotherhood among men. It promotes the higher life of the spirit when all practise Svadharma without *Kama* (desire for fruit). Desire for the gains or wages of work becomes absorbing when the fear of comparative displacement from rival industrial groups produces uncertainty in regard to the future and the resulting trepidation of the heart. But, when the industrial groups are non-competing as they must be under the principles and working of Svadharma each industrial group becomes a *hereditary varna* and an organised collection of families each having its assured

place from generation to generation and observing the rules and conventions established in each industrial group for the taking and training of apprentices each of whom becomes a master and skilled professional in his own good time and turn. The life of man from childhood to adolescence and from adolescent and hardy manhood to the status of a veteran who feels his task done and awaits his divine master's call to lasting peace and bliss is filled at every stage with the consciousness of worth gained and duties done to the satisfaction of God and man and, above all, the approval of one's own enlightened conscience.

How different is all this from the defence of property in land or of the owning of shares in an industrial concern by Capitalists on the ground that every one is entitled to all that he needs or acquires for the expression and finding of his status in life as a respectable member of society and useful citizen of the State. So long as such is the basic idea and purpose of social and State organisation, no power on earth can resist the continued war of classes that has been going on and constitutes a perpetual menace to the world's peace and to civilisation itself.

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## CHAPTER XXVII

### Property and the Coming Social Order.

EUROPE—at least Western Europe (and America, too)—is gradually recovering from the influence exercised on men's minds by the unpromising attacks of Socialism on Property in its early days of close identification or sympathy with Communism. No doubt, of late Bolshevist Russia, under the guidance of Lenin and Trotsky, is attempting a social reconstruction based upon the destruction of capitalism the abolition of democracy, and the absolute rule of the proletariat. But we ought not to fail to notice that in the *first* place, there is much brute force and the insidious influence exercised by the monopoly of the harvested foodstuffs (gained by military strength) at the back of the Bolshevist movement. In the *second* place, Lenin at the very outset, gained the co operation of the Russian peasants by the promise of the land—a promise partially fulfilled at the Revolution and so the peasants—the real Russian nation—may be said to represent the

principle of private property. In the *third* place, the economic conditions in Russia today as depicted by observers in Russia itself border on something like chaos. The abolition of private trading has created profiteering and corruption on an unheard-of scale. Owing to the lack of implements, draught animals, and seed grain, the agricultural harvest is disappointing. In industry, raw materials are exhausted and their supply cannot be replenished. Coal-production is decreasing, and the output is taken up for running railways so that iron foundries and other industrial concerns have to close down and thus tend to augment the volume of unemployment. Private enterprise is decaying, and the resources of the State are at a low ebb. If all this is true, Soviet ideals of the Communist or Socialist State must have proved a miserable failure.

But it is not, however, of Soviet methods of State control and State ownership of industry or of land and capital—that we are thinking of when we speak of a *new or coming social order*. We are thinking of the principles on which the new industrial society is to be built. The members of every trade, profession, or industry will form the new social unit. As Mr. Stirling Taylor says:—"The guild is one

of the most convenient forms in which the work of the world can be accomplished". Every social problem with which the collective life of the nation is concerned is to be henceforth subordinated to the production of wealth, and the units of society or to be grouped primarily according to their industrial functions. In the second place the chief social function of each group of workers and each branch of national production and industry is to perform the particular work allotted to it. Mr. Stirling Taylor says:—"The Guild theory is a revolt against central bureaucracy." For instance, the work of the mines about which there was so much agitation and anxiety both for the Government and the public in England about three years back will, under the Guild system, be managed not by a body of Government officials who draft treaties or of Government clerks, who fill ledgers, but by those who work at the mines whether as hewers, engineers, or the ministerial and clerical staffs who work at the pit's mouth. It is those who do the *practical work* of each branch of national production or industry that know all about it and can control it to the best advantage. The Government official or clerk is an outsider, and so it is right to assume that they cannot carry on the work of the

industrial classes in an efficient manner. In the *third* place, the State's functions are not to be dispensed with altogether. The State alone is to define the terms on which charters are to be granted to each Guild for carrying on its industry. The granting of charters does not mean that each Guild is to have a monopoly of the production of its own branch of industry. If it has such a monopoly, it will lie in its power to raise prices in the most thoughtless and reckless manner, so as to endanger the public interest. The State, therefore, might, in its charters, make due provision for healthy, but not for senseless, unlicensed and anarchical, competition. The public good alone, and not the particular good of each Guild, is to be the consideration guiding the State in this matter. When this has been done, each Guild or Corporation will have the fullest liberty to carry on its internal affairs without any interference from outside and according to the will of the majority of its members. Each Guild will declare, from its own point of view, the standard of excellence to which its production is to attain, the rates at which its members are to be remunerated for their work, the length of their working days, and the privileges conceded to them both when they carry on their work and during the

holidays when they are off duty. The centralised departmentalism of the official bureaucracy which has long exercised a tyrannical control and influence over the industrial mind will now cease, and pass away as the baseless fabric of a vision. *Fourthly* every Guild will have its method and organisation for carrying on its industrial affairs under its own democratically elected chief and his lieutenants in the light of its past experience. The relations between guildsmen and the non working capitalist who still survives will be under the control of the State.

The revolution thus outlined will put an end to the capitalist exploitation of labour and will bring in an industrial state into existence under the *guardianship and supervision, but not the control* of the political and territorial or geographical State. The system however, does not necessarily, as already stated get rid of the capitalist but restricts the sphere of his operations. As regards the land even if the State nationalises the land and expropriates the land lord it will have to bring into existence agricultural guilds or encourage their formation under some system of village organisation similar to what existed in ancient or mediaeval India and reconcile the collective ownership with the holding of land assigned to each

individual tēnant or head of a family either for a term of years, or under conditions of permanent tenure variable from time to time at the will of the parties concerned in the settlement. Even the reconstruction programme of the Labour Party in England, while standing for what it calls "the common ownership of the nation's land to be applied as suitable opportunities occur," realises the need of maintaining "*small holdings made accessible to practical agriculturists*" side by side with "national farms," administered on a large scale, with the utmost use of machinery, municipal enterprises in agriculture, and farms let to co-operative societies and other tenants under covenants," &c. Thus, private property in one form or another remains and is reconcileable with the new and improved social and industrial order, now in process of contemplation or evolution.

There is no doubt, also that a federal organisation of the various guilds of industry will have to be brought into existence to prevent conflict or inefficiency arising from mutual competition or want of adaptation between the supply and demand of the products of labour of various guilds. Such conflict or inefficiency as we have spoken of may be due to ignorance or traditionalism acting as impediments to the acquisition

of technical knowledge and skill.' It is not enough to secure solidarity and security for labour, but it is absolutely necessary to provide for the freedom and enlightenment of labourers so that they may always have their eyes fixed on the requirements of progress and refinement in character or true civilisation. The federal organisation of the several groups or guilds of labourers will have to adopt the system of holding frequent congresses in order to get rid of the evils,—physical, moral, political, or industrial and technical,—that exist or may arise from time to time. At the same time, the problems arising from a complicated system of organisation will have also to be faced. The late Swami Vivekananda used to say that the dangers of organisation and system-building will loom large in the future of humanity. No great or complicated organisation can maintain itself without leaders, and the bringing in of leadership will bring in its own problems and perils. Hence, the central State in some form or other, will be needed to deal with evils as they arise and to prevent or put down conflicts among the local or sectional authorities and organisations when they come to a head and breed dangerous impulses or revolutionary passions and outbreaks. It is, also,

necessary that the State authorities, central and local, should guard the individual and the family, and the instincts or impulses naturally implanted in man which make for the maintenance of human personality and the ties of love or brotherhood which family or communal union tends to breed among men.

How is the Hindu social order based on Dharma free from the dangers and disturbances just noted, or from their possibility and the apprehensions regarding them which are apt to trouble the human mind and bring in various kinds of social distractions and the activities needed to terminate them? The truth is that our system of Varnas and the differentiation of Varnas according to the varying exigencies of each age and stage of social transition constitute, as a modern writer calls it "a perfectly unique social organisation." Its "*unique*" character lies chiefly in the *fact* that the four fundamental Varnas owe their origin and their distinctiveness to God. You may call it a mere theory or a mere article of faith, and vehemently deny the allegation of *fact*. But men are after all to be tested and judged according to the sincerity and solidity of their convictions and beliefs. We deny the assertion that "the whole Rig-Veda is evidence that the four castes are not races created



separately by God " They are not "races,"—but *Varnas* or groups of the human race, "created separately," and still to some extent preserving their separateness There are living Western scholars who have proved that the four distinctive *Varnas* had already come into existence, at the time of the *Rig Veda* Some scholars have also shown that their distinctiveness had become established even before the separation of the Hindus from the Persians had taken place Further, there are other Vedic sources of information to be taken into account besides the *Rig Veda*,—viz the *Upanishads*—which rank even higher in Hindu estimation A *second* reason why the Hindu social organisation is 'unique' is to be found in the universally recognised doctrine that the original distinction of *Varnas* and their subsequent transformations and developments including the entire history of every individual and group or *Varna* are all due to Karma and rebirths of the *Jivas* in their Samsaric journeys and migrations through the world This doctrine is laid down in every source book and sacred authority recognised by the Hindus

Further it is the occupational groups and sub-centres or communities that led to the formation and

growth of the ancient Indian democracy with its village, village assemblies, caste and sub-caste panchayets, the suburban or urban guilds and councils, and communal federations and assemblies of groups of villages, and so on. Side by side with this *communal* organisation and interlaced with them, there is also a *territorial* organisation emanating from the central authority of the Indian State and associated with the work of assemblies whose members are chosen to represent the interests of the populations inhabiting territorial areas. At the same time, it is not denied that diverse groups, forming impure castes and of unknown or forgotten racial origins and filiations, became enrolled into and amalgamated with the Hindu social organisation and formed occupational guilds of their own, owing to their pursuing a special calling of their own. A writer in the November (1922) number of the "*Indian Review*" (Madras) says:—"the inherent advantages, of association and of collective bargaining might have been one of the prompting motives" of the formation of Indian groups. Such "advantages" might have added strength to the groups when they had already come into existence. But it is doubtful whether the original formation of the groups can be traced to economic motives and

considerations. We are inclined to think that the associated group and the corresponding group-mind had long been presented before the rise of utilitarian considerations or the exercise of the central or supreme authority or both commingled and consolidated together, helped to bring about the formation of a professional guild. It is certain, however, that when once the affiliation of an occupational group with the existing social and communal organisation had taken place, it formed an inseparable integral member of the immemorial *divine* social order and is recognised as such by all sections and Varnas of the entire Hindu society. It has its own Svadharma, determined according to the injunctions of the Shastras, with all the opportunities of spiritual evolution for its individual members which are available for the rest of the members of the Hindu social organisation. It is thus that the Hindu state and society goes on for ever fulfilling its purpose of being what the Vedanta calls it,—“*the bridge of immortality*.” No social order in the West, past, present or future, has ever had or can have, such a purpose,—for India alone, to use the words of Swami Vivekananda, is “the land to which all souls must come wending their way to God.”

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### Property and Labour Ideals.

**O**UR discussion so far has shown that the abolition of private ownership of land and capital is more or less of a dream,—that the State must and will exist in one form or another, and that, even if the State took possession of the land of the community, it must break most of it up into holdings and pass them to private possessors, individual or associated, for purposes of cultivation on terms which will convert possession into practical ownership—that, even if guilds of workmen are formed to own and manage capital under conditions imposed by State charters, it will be still necessary to grant freedom to capitalists who wish to carry on industry on their own terms so long as they conform to regulations imposed by the State to determine their relations to the guilds, and that the members of the guilds, too, must have their own standards of living and controlling their expenditure in a way not very different from those which owners of property at present possess,—and that the Utopian dreams of Socialism and Anarchism are

bound to fail as being antagonistic to the instincts of human nature which favour the universal prevalence of private property and the existence of State authority and institutions to protect it from violation and strengthen its transfer from hand to hand. We have also explained how Indian Dharma recognises all the needs and instincts of human nature, and frames the regulations and institutions needed to help individuals and society to fulfil those needs and satisfy those instincts and thus enable one to gain the ultimate purpose of human existence as laid down by the Veda and established, too, on an irrefragable basis of ratiocination and the invulnerable rock of enlightened spiritual experience and realisation.

But the Utopian mind of man is not content with simply attacking such fundamental institutions as the State, private property, or even the new aspiration for a communal organisation of society by occupational groups or guilds, &c. The Utopian reformer descends into details regarding the industrial life of workmen and proposes measures of social relief or betterment which will help the State and Society to reach the highest possible standard of industrial welfare and social improvement. These proposals of reform may be enumerated as follows:—(1) All workmen willing to

take up an occupation must be assured of a minimum wage ; (2) No one must be compelled to work, and even those who chose to be idle must be assured of a bare livelihood through the payment of what is known as "the vagabond's wage,"—while, at the same time, measures must be taken to bring into existence a strong public opinion adverse to idleness which every one will have to conform to by reason of its irresistible power ; (3) The working day should not exceed four hours ; (4) Every one must be taught not *one* industry or trade, but several, so that one can vary his occupation according to the conditions of the demand or of the season ; (5) The diminishing of the unpleasantness of certain kinds of work by offering the attractions of higher pay or shorter working day or both ; (6) The production of luxuries in limited quantity and of necessities in quantities sufficient to meet the needs of all , (7) The payment of wages to all women who are engaged in doing their domestic work at home and do not hire themselves for work out of doors ; (8) the free education, general and technical, of all children and young people,—at least to the termination of the secondary course of instruction ; (9) The levy of a "single tax" so as to secure for the State all kinds of

unearned increments in industry and agriculture;  
(10) A Capital Levy chargeable on all property (excepting the smallest savings up to a fixed limit) and at rates "very steeply graduated so as to take only a small contribution from the little people and a very much larger percentage from the millionaires." All this seems to us to be practically impossible—and merely a Utopian dream. Whence is the State to find the means for carrying out such a tremendous programme—based on purely idealistic aspirations after a perfection of human character such as has never existed, because human egoism is a fact that must be reckoned with as a constant and normal phenomenon of human nature? We do not say that all the proposed measures of reform are equally impracticable and Utopian. We think some are of a character which, in some modified form, may be worth adopting as a principle of reform. For instance, the reduction of the length of the working day is a measure, both needed and salutary, though at present a four hour's day may be a change too radical and impracticable for adoption. Another measure much needed in the present time when several millions of wage-earning men employed in munition works and other war-industries and occupations have been or

are being discharged is to find work for these men suffering from unemployment. It may be necessary, both for the fulfilment of this duty as well as for the repayment of some portion at least of the enormous extra national debts incurred for meeting war expenses of all kinds, to make what is called a *capital levy* on all property above a fixed amount,—the amount levied, whatever may be the percentage fixed, being paid not in one and the same year, but spread over a number of years. This levy may also be utilised for the provision later on of an insurance in seasons when the working classes have to face the peril of unemployment. Mr. Wells, in one of his election addresses, stated that it was “practically the issue of the (recent) election.” We doubt if it was made the one issue of the General Election. Mr. Wells said :—“It has been made the issue at this election by the action of the larger part of the press of this country.” But none of the great *political parties* in the State,—not even the Labour party in its manifesto to the Electors—put it forward as the one issue before the voters. Mr. Wells rightly claimed that it was “a proposal drawn up by economists and well informed people”—that it was “a proposal to make a levy on the property accumulated during the



war in order to reduce the intolerable burden of debt that weighs on the country at the present time " If some such step was not taken to reduce the national debt incurred for carrying on the war, nearly one-half of the national annual income would have to be spent upon the War Debts,—for "the continual paying off of that which will never be paid." We thus see that not all the proposals of the Labour party for reform can be condemned as unpractical and as savouring of mere speculation Still, most of those proposals proceed from the rebellious spirit which disregards all the sobrieties of solvent business life and is also hostile to the fundamental institution of property as a basis of civilised Life We have only to mention the proposal to assure a livelihood—"the vagabond's wage,"—even to those who are idle and the proposal to pay wages to women who are engaged in carrying on their domestic work in the home

The fact, however, that these and other similar proposals are being made and discussed makes it clear that the foundations on which Western industry is built up are false and slippery and that there must be a revision early of industrial ideals and institutions. Professor Bertrand Russell puts the matter well as

follows :—"The civilised world has need of fundamental change if it is to be saved from decay,—change both in its economic structure and in its philosophy of life." There can be no doubt of the essential truth of this view, so long as cost of production remains so high as at present, unemployment is increasing, and foreign exploitation continues to be necessary for the maintenance of industrial prosperity and such a thing as an industrially self-contained community continues but the baseless fabric of a vision. The idea that the change wanted and in prospect is to be in the direction of "Communism" is utterly unfounded. In a previous chapter, we have referred to the present condition of Russia as showing that it is far from an encouragement to the advocates of Communism. Socialism, as it is held at the present day, is far indeed from supporting its old antagonism to private property and to the existence of the State as an indispensable aid to a stable condition of society. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, in a small essay on "The Socialist Movement," says :—"The common idea is that Socialism proposes to abolish private property. That is no less mistaken than is the view that Socialism and Anarchism are one and the same thing." Socialism even today believes in the

need for the continuance of a legislative and coercive state, while Anarchism presupposes the abolition of the state or at least believes in a state in which all obligations between man and man and between man and society are to be based on a purely ethical and voluntary basis of friendship and affection. Further, Mr Ramsay Macdonald assures us that "the Socialist assumes that individuality requires private property through which to express itself. Man must control and own something, otherwise he does not control and own himself." He further says — "Objection to inheritance is not an essential part of the Socialist system."

Further, the idea that Russian Bolshevism has established itself on a firm "communist" basis is at least premature. It may not be true that it is what some describe it to be, — "unspeakable savagery." It may not even be true that there is—to use the words of Dr E. J. Dillon writing in the *Fortnightly Review*—an "inherent incapacity in Russian Bolshevism sincerely to recognise the canons of Western nations and to evolve a system of governance which could by any stretch of the imagination be described as democratic and progressive." But there is no doubt that it is not representative of the Russian

nation ; and there is no doubt also that neither the political methods nor the economic results of Bolshevism can yet be regarded as re-assuring. We have already dwelt briefly on this last point in a previous chapter of this book. That Bolshevism is not in any sense representative of Russian national life and opinion is fairly evident. We are assured by a member of the Russian Communist party—Mr. G. Zunoviev—that according to available figures, “the total membership of the party amounts to 486,000,” and that “the party, in an immense country such as ours, which forms one-sixth of the whole globe, cannot be homogeneous.” Further, in the Red Army which forms the bed-rock of the strength and vitality of Russian Bolshevism and Communism, there are from 90,000 to 100,000 Communists, including the military youth organisation and staff colleges, and that of these only about 40 per cent are workers, and the other 60 per cent are peasants. Mr. Zunoviev himself writes of his party :—“Our party is a party of monopoly, and because it is the only one active in public affairs, certain elements force their way into it which under other circumstances would belong to other parties. What a variety we have ! The peasant element is a source-

of danger, also the office workers who are not from the ranks of the working classes and have joined us merely 'from self interest'. There is no denying the difficulties in our path. It is quite true that a molecular process is taking place within the party which reflects more than one struggle, which even reflects the class struggle." The economic and educational organisation of the country must be developed, and more work must be done among women to gain their adhesion and support, as also the extension of the party's influence among the youth and the increase of the workmen's numbers in the membership and muster-roll of the party. It is doubtless true that, as the Mensheviks assert, "during the past years, with their lack of any sort of public life in the prevailing atmosphere of apathy and general confusion, all other parties and organisations were helpless, and the Bolsheviks together with the Red Army have been the only organised social power." There are too many heterogeneous elements making for disruption in the Communist and Bolshevik party. The present element, although "firmly entrenched in the district and regional administrative bodies," has no special kinship with the aims and policy of the ruling Bolshevik class. Every important

workers' group has also its place within the party and is beginning to awaken to a sense of its own interests within the party state. Then there are the "intellectuals" with varying aims—some of democratic views and others aiming at making Russia a "Great Power State." There are also various bourgeoisie elements within the party. The elements of weakness and disunion—of decay and decomposition—are plentiful, and at any moment Bolshevism may be destroyed, or break up in consequence of its own internal weakness. Besides, there is a reluctance among the Governments and peoples of Western Europe to admit the Russian Bolshevik State, inspired and led by Lenin and his Communist partisans, to the community of civilised nations and their task of European reconstruction. Some of them regard Russia also as their own pre-destined ground and sphere of exploitation. The strength of Bolshevism lies in its leaders,—in the perfect character of Lenin absolutely devoid of all sordid ambitions or personal aims and in the organising genius of Trotsky. Its support lies mainly in the bayonets and rifles of the Red Party of Bolsheviks.

When we take all these circumstances into account, it is too early to say that Russian Com-

munism is a force which the world will have yet to reckon with as a formidable menace to civilisation or even to those fundamental and essential human instincts or institutions which it has hitherto been accustomed to regard as its inevitable and indispensable foundations and supports. Especially the Sanātana Dharma whose one and final aim is the liberation of all men and all living souls in the universe from the bondage of Samsara has not the least occasion and need to be frightened at its apparent advance in power, popularity, or permanence among the half-civilised communities and populations of Eastern Europe.